Veterans in Politics

The Story of the G.A.R.

by

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To Charles, Cynthia, and Skipper

with gratitude for their patience

Preface

MODERN PRESSURE GROUPS are powerful and efficient; but they are no more effective than one that operated during a simpler era in American history. Although the commonly heard statement that Union Civil War veterans virtually ruled the country for thirty years is exaggerated, the Grand Army of the Republic did wield great political power. At the height of their influence, in fact, former soldiers were able to command benefits which cost the federal government more than one-fifth of its total revenue.

A basic reason for their power was the hold that these victors of civil strife had upon the emotions of the public, a hold that victors of a national war could probably never attain. A combination of circumstances, however, facilitated the development of the highly successful pressure group. After a brief period of prominence Union veterans tended to merge into the mass of the citizenry, and it was expected that from the mid-seventies, government outlay for pensions would gradually decline. But at this point the Republicans' hold on the federal administration weakened, and it became expedient to cultivate the veterans' consciousness as a special class. Henceforth both parties turned to former soldiers for recruits in bitter campaigns. Pension claim agents called more loudly for soldier unity in demanding pension legislation. Politically active veterans joined the clamor in the hope that veterans would return the favor with solid support. Coincident with these developments a group of energetic organizers rose to leadership in the Grand Army. Small wonder that veterans reawakened to a sense of their power and hastened to don the G.A.R. badge.

The constant solicitation of the soldier by parties was perhaps chiefly responsible for the veteran's determination to win monetary rewards. Democrats were first to bid for the soldier vote,

but from the beginning circumstances were against them. Numerous advantages, plus zealous organization work and clever propaganda, kept most veterans within the Republican fold.

For obvious reasons Grand Army leaders consistently played down the Grand Army's political activities. With recent writers, too, the trend has been to discount the Union veteran's political interest and influence. The primary purpose of this study has been to discover what factors gave rise to the veteran pressure group and whether it actually did have impact upon developments outside as well as within the political sphere. An incidental objective has been to disclose the techniques that campaign organizers used in appealing to the former soldier.

Of primary importance in a study of the Union veteran are Grand Army records: correspondence, circulars, general orders, and encampment proceedings. For the early period these records are disappointingly incomplete. The society's first adjutant general, B. F. Stephenson, had little clerical help, and failed to keep orderly records. Moreover, a considerable amount of G.A.R. material was among the personal papers that his wife burned after his death. The Boston fire of 1872 destroyed other valuable records. When Robert Beath became adjutant general he searched for missing national material, and by 1876 could report that he had collected thirteen sets of journals for headquarters.

From time to time officers discovered missing department records in dusty attics. General A. W. Greely stimulated a search for material in 1895 when he requested department officers to fill the blank spaces in the War Department's files. Some of the state records, however, have never been found. Fortunately, newspapers provide many of the missing links.

National Grand Army headquarters has not preserved its officers' correspondence. Probably most of it was destroyed each year when the office moved to the city of the new commander in chief. Some officers, among them Generals John A. Logan and Lucius Fairchild, retained letters on G.A.R. matters. Valuable material on the Grand Army's political activities is preserved with their correspondence. Equally important information, of

course, is to be found in the papers of political leaders who were not Grand Army men. Manuscript sets at the Library of Congress are rich in information for the student of the Union veteran.

The Library also possesses a wealth of Grand Army material. Records acquired by purchase were largely increased in 1916 when the War Department turned over its files. And in 1920 Grand Army headquarters gave the Library 453 volumes, 662 pamphlets, and 5 albums. All that national headquarters retained in 1950 were copies of the national and state journals, copies of successive Blue Books (rules and regulations), the society's official seal, and a collection of flags and badges. Upon the death of the last G.A.R. member Smithsonian Institution will receive the flags; the remainder will go to the Library of Congress.

This study is the outgrowth of a dissertation, "Civil War Veterans in Politics," which the University of Wisconsin accepted in 1938 as partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctor's degree in history. Since that time research has been extended in several fields. The most important addition to the bibliography is the voluminous Benjamin Harrison set, recently opened to general use at the Library of Congress.

Over a fifteen-year period of research on the Union veteran the writer consistently has received courteous and valuable assistance from staff members of the Library of Congress. Special thanks are due Dr. Thomas P. Martin, formerly of the Library's Manuscript Division, and also Dr. Elizabeth G. McPherson, Dr. C. Percy Powell, and Mr. John de Porry of the same department. Mr. D. J. H. Cole has been very helpful, particularly on last minute problems.

The author is grateful for other courtesies: from staff members in the Libraries of the Wisconsin State Historical Society and the Pennsylvania Historical Society; from President-Emeritus H. S. Garfield of Williams College for authorizing use of President James A. Garfield's papers; from the late William L. Mattox, former editor of the Washington *National Tribune*, for permitting examination of the *Tribune* files; and from Miss Cora E. Gillis, permanent national executive secretary of the

G.A.R. Miss Gillis not only graciously supplied information regarding the headquarters' records but gave the writer a firsthand account of the Grand Army's final encampment.

The author owes a deep debt of gratitude to Professor William B. Hesseltine of the University of Wisconsin for steady and stimulating encouragement as well as unflagging willingness to give constructive criticism. Thanks are due Professor T. Harry Williams of Louisiana State University for helpful suggestions and for reading the manuscript. The writer is grateful to her husband, Charles L. Dearing, for valuable comments on style as well as for patient understanding during the time-consuming period of research and writing. She is indebted to Mrs. Fred Myers for efficient assistance in footnote chores. Any error in fact or misjudgment in interpretation, of course, rests with the author.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Army Vote

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, oppressed by the ebb of his creative imagination, journeyed to Washington in the spring of 1862 to seek inspiration from the capital's war excitement. But the martial enthusiasm brought him no stimulation. Beneath the city's patriotic fervor the aging novelist sensed an undercurrent of feverish intrigue created by politically ambitious Union officers maneuvering for military advancement. These activities so alarmed Hawthorne that he visualized a government dominated for a half-century by "an incalculable preponderance of military titles and pretensions," with a succession of "bullet-headed" generals holding the presidency. Prophesying that veterans would fill all important offices at home and abroad, he advised civilians to "consider their wretched prospects in the future, and assume the military button before it is too late." [1]

For many aspiring young politicians, such counsel was superfluous. They realized clearly enough that success in the army would advance their careers. Outstanding among them were the ambitious John Alexander Logan of Illinois, Lucius Fairchild of Wisconsin, and Benjamin Butler of Massachusetts. Carl Schurz, whose commission was a reward for political service, readily admitted that he sought promotion in order to influence his "large constituency with whom a certain kind of success gives prestige and power." State Senator James A. Garfield offered his services in the hope of being elected colonel of his regiment; Benjamin Harrison hastily resigned his minor political post to enlist; Lew Wallace took command of his regiment with a ceremony strongly suggestive of a political rally. While these younger men struggled

[1] Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Chiefly about War Matters by a Peaceable Man," in *Atlantic Monthly* (Boston, 1857–), X (1862), 45.

for advancement in the lower ranks of the army, some of the generals fondly hoped that military success might sweep them into the presidency.[2]

The motives of these patriots were generally understood and aroused a certain degree of resentment among the rank and file. One soldier commented, "It really seemed that our general officers, or at least some of them had their own political interest more at stake than the interest of their country, and were serving their own selfish ends. . . ." Another, complaining of this type of officer, warned, "Unless something is done to rescue the army from the politicians, patriots will hang up their swords in disgust and despair." Soldiers grew bitter against Daniel E. Sickles, who was reportedly paying newspaper correspondents "to work him up as a demigod, to the abnegation of other corps." [3]

The political views held by the majority of these ambitious officers constituted a serious problem for the young Republican party, which won the election of 1860 only because the Democrats presented two candidates. Republicans received but 40 per cent of the popular vote and failed to win a majority in either house of Congress. Consequently their first task was to attract popular support. The new army, however, presented serious obstacles. When Lincoln assumed office and responsibility for the conduct of a war, he discovered that "very few of our friends

[2] Claude Moore Fuess, *Carl Schurz, Reformer, 1829–1906* (New York, 1932), 94; Carl Schurz to Charles Sumner, March 8, 1863, Carl Schurz MSS. (1856–1907), Library of Congress; Joshua Giddings to his wife, May 26, 1861, Joshua Giddings–George W. Julian MSS. (1839–96), Library of Congress; Dorothy Burne Goebel and Julius Goebel, Jr., *Generals in the White House* (New York, 1945), 212; Kenneth M. Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War" (MS. doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1941), 138, 165, 166; Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln, the War Years* (New York, 1939), 4 vols., I, 289; Sumner to Richard Cobden, September 4, 1862, in Edward L. Pierce (ed.), *Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner* (Boston, 1877), 2 vols., II, 144; L. P. Morgan to Benjamin F. Butler, January 2, 1863, in Benjamin F. Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence of General Benjamin F. Butler during the Period of the Civil War* (Norwood, Mass., 1917), 5 vols., II, 663; Alfred Vagts, *A History of Militarism, Romance and Realities of a Profession* (London, 1938), 338.

[3] Charles H. Boyce, "History of the 28th Regiment of New York State Volunteers Army of U. S. 1861–," bound MS., volume presented to Library of Congress by Frances E. Dunham, Los Angeles; James Gillette to ?, July 22, 1862, James Gillette MSS. (1857–87), Library of Congress; *id.* to ?, May 12, 1863, *ibid.*

had a military education or were of the profession of arms." [4] He was, therefore, obliged to give the highest appointments to his political opponents.

Another reason for commissioning leading Democrats was Lincoln's desire to bring their followers into full support of the war. Thus, Congressman Logan was sent back as colonel to his Democratic constituency, where his earnest eloquence transformed muttering, threatening men into cheerful volunteers. Lincoln took "special care" of John A. McClernand because "as long as he adhered to the war he carried his Illinois constituency with him." When Ben Butler received a major general's commission, he reminded the President that he had campaigned against the Republicans. "All the better," Lincoln replied; "I hope your example will bring many of the same sort with you." [5]

The President's appointment of these and other administration opponents was partly responsible for the willingness of so many midwestern Democrats to volunteer. But the price for this success was high: it was estimated that four-fifths of the major and brigadier generals were Democrats. George B. McClellan, Henry W. Halleck, and Don Carlos Buell—all Democrats—held the army's three most important commands.[6]

[4] Abraham Lincoln to Schurz, November 10, 1862, in Gilbert Avery Tracy (ed.), *Uncollected Letters of Abraham Lincoln* (Boston and New York, 1917), 313; Rush C. Hawkins to Lyman Trumbull, January 9, 1862; S. T. Dubois to *id.*, March 20, 1862, Lyman Trumbull MSS. (1855–73), Library of Congress; Joseph Medill to Edwin M. Stanton, January 21, 1862, Edwin M. Stanton MSS. (1839–70), Library of Congress; Donn Piatt, *Memories of the Men Who Saved the Union* (New York and Chicago, 1887), 75; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln,* I, 290.

[5] Mrs. John A. Logan, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife* (New York, 1913), 97–99; Charles A. Dana, *Recollections of the Civil War, with the Leaders at Washington and in the Field in the Sixties* (New York, 1898), 59; article by Benjamin F. Butler in Allen Thorndike Rice (ed.), *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of his Time* (New York, 1886), 140; *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (New York, 1885–86), 2 vols., I, 244.

[6] Wood Gray, *The Hidden Civil War; the Story of the Copperheads* (New York, 1942), 62; J. G. Randall, *Lincoln the President, Springfield to Gettysburg* (New York, 1945), 2 vols., II, 235; Carl Russell Fish, *The Civil Service and the Patronage* (New York, 1905), 172; T. Harry Williams, "The Attack upon West Point during the Civil War," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* (Cedar Rapids, 1914–), XXV (1939), 495; *id.*, "Voters in Blue: the Citizen Soldiers of the Civil War," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* XXXI (1944), 189; New York *Herald,* February 3, 1864.

In lesser appointments, too, Democrats were favored. The federal government left the selection of regimental and company officers to the states, and governors appointed those "who would produce the more agreeable consequences at the next election. . . ." When Butler warned Lincoln against allowing the conflict to become a "party war" and asked permission to raise a division commanded by Democrats, the President was only too willing to sign the order. Butler recorded that for the six thousand New Englanders whom he recruited, "all the New England Governors appointed Democratic officers of my selection save one. And this plan was followed by Governors of the Northern and Western States. . . ." Oliver P. Morton of Indiana made so many appointments from Democratic ranks that his followers raised vigorous objections. It was the result, then, of policy as well as circumstance that at the very outset the administration committed the military conduct of the war into Democratic hands.[7]

For opposition leaders the situation presented an opportunity to regain the power lost through party division and defeat. Republican success in the fall elections of 1861 frightened Democrats into abandoning their original spirit of wholehearted cooperation with the administration. Preservation of their party, they decided, necessitated resumption of opposition, and in the army lay an excellent possibility for developing new strength. A successful general, supported by the enthusiasm of his soldiers, might carry the next presidential election. General McClellan's position as commander of the Army of the Potomac and his conservative attitude on the slavery question made him the object of Democratic hopes. As early as 1861, politicians were whispering in his ear hints regarding the presidency, and he soon became involved in political intrigue.[8]

The next step was to win the army for McClellan and for Democratic principles. Republicans later asserted that only their

[7] T. W. Higginson, "Regular and Volunteer Officers," in *Atlantic Monthly*, XIV (1864), 354; Fred A. Shannon, *The Organization and Administration of the Union Army, 1861–1865* (Cleveland, 1928), 2 vols., I, 159–60, 170; article by Butler in Rice (ed.), *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, 141–42; Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 166.

[8] Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 172–73; Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 62–63; George B. McClellan to his wife, August 9, 1861, quoted in *McClellan's Own Story: the War for the Union* (New York, 1887), 85.

own followers answered the call to arms, but this was pure fiction; numerous Democrats among the rank and file provided a nucleus to facilitate their party's propagandizing efforts. Moreover, it was an easy task to create affection for McClellan because his refusal to sacrifice his men contrasted favorably in their minds with the administration's constant demands for action. Abundant evidence attests to the soldiers' deep regard for their general. The following expression is but one of many: "Were the army to hear of McClellan's death it would dissolve to nothing in a month." Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles recorded Lincoln's conviction that McClellan was stronger than the administration with a "considerable part of this Army of the Potomac. . . . His leading generals have contrived to strengthen him in the hearts of the soldiery." [9]

In their quiet campaign to arouse soldiers against Republican views, Democrats relied upon the party press as well as upon officers. They excluded all papers from the Army of the Potomac except the New York *World* and the *Herald*, which they showered upon the men free of charge. "The Democrats are striving to regain party favor, and are weakening the strong arm of the Administration," was one report from the field. Apparently the propaganda had its desired effect, for soon Democratic newspapers were publishing numerous letters from army men expressing distaste for extreme Republican doctrines. Alarmed politicians agreed that the Army of the Potomac was being "drilled into an anti-Republican engine," while a New York *Times* correspondent reported from the field that opposition to the administration "pervaded the whole army." [10]

So confident was McClellan of his army's support that he al-

[9] Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 62; Williams, "Voters in Blue," *loc. cit.*, 187; Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 139; Jacob Dolson Cox, *Military Reminiscences of the Civil War* (New York, 1900), 2 vols., I, 368; James Gillette to "dear Parents," January 14, 1862, filed under 1863, Gillette MSS.; *Diary of Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy under Lincoln and Johnson*, with an introduction by John T. Morse (Boston and New York, 1911), 3 vols., I, 109 (September 7, 1862).

[10] Diary of William Parker Cutler, printed in Julia Perkins Cutler, *Life and Times of Ephraim Cutler* (Cincinnati, 1890), 298 (January 21, 24, 1863) (hereinafter cited as "Cutler Diary"); Rev. John R. Adams to his wife, January 31, 1863, *Memorial and Letters of Rev. John R. Adams* (Cambridge, 1890), 98; Washington *National Intelligencer*, July 25, 1861; New York *Times*, January 16, 1863.

most followed the advice of politicians to give open resistance to Lincoln's proclamation emancipating slaves in the rebellious states. Three generals who had been summoned for consultation on the matter, however, advised against it, although McClellan announced that the army would enforce his decision on any question of war policy. The general, remarking that his men were furiously opposed to the proclamation, suggested that he at least make some statement to quiet them. The others agreed, and McClellan issued a general order condemning soldiers' discussions of governmental measures when carried beyond "temperate and respectful expressions of opinion." His conclusion that "the remedy for political errors is to be found only in the action of the people at the polls" was perhaps a veiled suggestion that the proclamation was a mistake that could be repudiated at the next election.[11]

Republicans grew increasingly uneasy over these developments. Not only might the soldiers' votes be the deciding factor in a close election; overwhelming army support of any particular policy would undoubtedly influence civilian opinion. The latter consideration was particularly important in 1862, when Republican propaganda was designed to identify the Democratic party with the Confederates. Any opposition to the administration's policy was construed as sympathy for enemy principles. Manifestly, Republicans had to capture the army politically before they could establish their contention that loyalty to the administration was synonymous with patriotism.

A minority faction within the Republican party, popularly known as the "Radicals," was particularly eager to win the political support of the troops. These extremists deplored Lincoln's cautious policy, which was designed to attract and retain the aid of those who would have been antagonized by a less moderate course. Radicals were convinced that only through abolition of slavery could the Republican party maintain its supremacy. For them the primary purpose of the military struggle was emancipa-

[11] Cox, *Military Reminiscences*, I, 359-60, 361; *McClellan's Own Story*, 615; John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History* (New York, 1890), 10 vols., II, 79; *ibid.*, IV, 181; Randall, *Lincoln the President*, II, 68, 102-103, 122-23; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, I, 602-609; Tyler Dennett (ed.), *Lincoln and the Civil War in the Diaries and Letters of John Hay* (New York, 1939), 217-18.

tion; the war would be a failure if it should end before the nation was ready for the step. They believed that the war should be conducted to achieve that end, and they hoped to push emancipation through as a military measure. The armies, therefore, must be directed by those who would further the cause. Radicals, ignoring the Democratic charge that abolition was more important to them than an early military victory,[12] demanded the removal of commanders who made any compromise on the slavery issue. At the same time the group applauded those officers whose actions indicated acceptance of the emancipation principle.

The necessity for dealing with slaves within their districts forced commanders to take some position on the slavery question. This they usually did in accordance with previous political affiliations, and their action immediately classified them in the minds of politicians. Some generals, especially in the West, adopted a military policy that indicated acceptance of the Radical point of view. For example, General John C. Frémont, commanding the Department of the West, exceeded his authority by freeing all slaves within his district; Lincoln modified the order because he believed it premature. Radicals praised the general highly; and when Lincoln finally removed him for bungling his job, they bitterly asserted that he was being sacrificed for his abolitionist views. A similar conflict developed over the recruiting of Negroes; while indignant Radicals shouted protests, Lincoln firmly checked those officers who used Negroes as soldiers before public opinion was ready for the step.[13]

Lincoln's proclamation freeing slaves in all territory still in rebellion on January 1, 1863, was a partial fulfillment of the Radicals' demands, but they constantly urged more extreme measures. Although the faction could claim several who were high in government councils, it was not yet sufficiently strong to control administration policy; for this reason it failed to force its views upon the army. Officers realized that they could gain Radical approval by adopting an abolitionist policy, but they perceived also

[12] A. R. Ward to W. Prime, June 16, 1886, George B. McClellan MSS. (1842–88), 2d Ser., XXXIX, Library of Congress.

[13] Indianapolis *Sentinel*, October 19, 24, 1861; Douglass' article in Rice (ed.), *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, 187; Butler's article, *ibid.*, 145; Piatt's article, *ibid.*, 495–97.

that in doing so they were risking defeat. General Benjamin F. Butler's political adviser counseled him, "If you carry out the abolition views and build up power that way, it would place you at the head of a party. . . ." Yet this course was hazardous, for it was "not certain the Abolition party can prevail. The Democratic party, and all the military with McClellan at their head offer a very formidable opposition. . . . It is but a step sometimes between a crown and a gibbet. . . ." [14] The same considerations occurred to other officers; they were wary of Radical solicitations.

The eagerness with which Radicals praised the few army officers who joined their ranks was equaled only by their vigor in assailing those who clearly advocated the Democratic position on the slavery issue. Determined to rid the army of these stumbling blocks to their policy, they turned their batteries first against Secretary of War Simon Cameron, whose inefficiency and corrupt dealings seemed less opprobrious to them than did his position on slavery. Cameron's change of heart on this question came too late to save his job; Radicals needed a stronger man to handle the commanders.[15] Their first victory in purging the army was in replacing Cameron with Edwin M. Stanton, a dynamo of energy who was highly efficient and—most important of all—completely lacking in any sense of personal loyalty to his chief. Stanton was eager to co-operate with Radicals and immediately began the work of eliminating Democratic officers.

Although Radicals disliked Generals Halleck and Buell for their conservative attitude, the sharpest thorn in their side was the fact that an open opponent of abolition commanded the Union forces. McClellan, therefore, became the focus for Radical attacks. The general's position was well known; he had written the President in July, 1862, "A declaration of radical views, especially upon slavery, will rapidly disintegrate our present armies." Radicals had other reasons for disliking him, and in these the moderate Republicans concurred. The conviction was spreading in both parties that McClellan would become the Democratic

[14] Mrs. Butler to Butler, September 28, 1862, in Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, II, 335.

[15] T. Harry Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals* (Madison, 1941), 37, 88–89.

presidential candidate in 1864. Although he avoided any definitely partisan statement until the autumn of 1863, he was unable to keep himself clear of political intrigue. Perhaps personal vanity rendered him susceptible to the flattery of politicians. In 1861 he wrote to his wife, "I receive letter after letter, have conversation after conversation, calling on me to save the nation, alluding to the Presidency, dictatorship. . . ." In 1862 Stanton expressed the conviction that McClellan had political aspirations; and in September of that year a politician informed General Butler, "McClellan, as you will see, is *the military* man for the Democratic party." [16]

A final reason for Republican opposition to McClellan was the belief that he had encouraged the conversion of his army into a Democratic machine. In secret caucus, administration leaders expressed alarm at this development. Radicals, indeed, repeatedly voiced the fear that McClellan might use his firm hold over his troops by marching them to Washington and, joining with Halleck, turn the Republicans out.[17]

McClellan's failure to take aggressive military action, characterized by Lincoln as "the slows," combined with bitter Radical agitation against him, led to his removal. Two cabinet Radicals, Stanton and Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase, joined with the Radical-dominated congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War in a campaign to oust him. McClellan wanted no quick and decisive victory, Radicals cried; he hoped for a compromise that would save slavery. For a time Lincoln hesitated, partly because of the army's confidence in its commander. When the congressional elections of 1862 proved disastrous to the administration, however, Radicals shouted that McClellan's influence was to blame, and his removal followed. Historians are

[16] George W. Julian, *Political Recollections, 1840–1872* (Chicago, 1884), 203; *Autobiography of Oliver Otis Howard, Major General United States Army* (New York, 1907), 2 vols., II, 167–70; George B. McClellan to his wife, August 9, 1861, in *McClellan's Own Story*, 85; n. 18, *infra;* Gen. W. B. Franklin to McClellan, April 7, 1862, quoted in *McClellan's Own Story*, 150; Mrs. Butler to Butler, September 28, 1862, in Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, II, 333.

[17] "Cutler Diary," 298 (January 21, 1863); Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*, 57; *id.*, "Attack on West Point," *loc. cit.*, 504; *id.*, "Voters in Blue," *loc. cit.*, 201.

still debating the extent to which the general's political ambitions influenced his policy and the part they played in his downfall. In any case, it must be admitted that, whatever his motives, in refusing to take aggressive action he played directly into the Radicals' hands.[18]

Republicans rejoiced that the way was now open to gain political control of the army. Radicals were at first disappointed over the appointment of Ambrose Burnside, a friend of McClellan's, to the command of the Army of the Potomac. But they took him under their protective wing when Burnside, fearing the wrath of the Committee on the Conduct of the War after the Fredericksburg disaster, assured committee members that he favored the abolition of slavery. Moreover, he announced, he was seeking to "inspire his fellow officers with a cordial hatred of the system." [19]

But the task of winning over the army to Republican principles was no easy one; the men were sincerely fond of their dismissed commander. Although civilians in general believed that Lincoln had acted primarily to ensure a vigorous prosecution of the war and to promote harmony between the War Department and the generals, the troops greeted the news of McClellan's removal with resentment. This was partly because they accepted his exaggerated estimate of the enemy's strength and therefore believed that he had shown considerable ability in saving them from annihilation in a struggle against great odds. They felt that the

[18] Welles, *Diary,* I, 100; Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals,* 77–191; Randall, *Lincoln the President,* II, 79–86, 116; Alexander K. McClure, *Abraham Lincoln and Men of War Times, Some Personal Recollections of War and Politics during the Lincoln Administration* (Philadelphia, 1892), 205; *The War for the Union, Memoir of John Cochrane* (New York, 1875), 33; Lord Lyons to Earl Russell, November 17, 1862, in Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln,* VI, 193; Gray, *Hidden Civil War,* 109–10.

For recent evaluations of McClellan, see H. J. Eckenrode and Bryan Conrad, *George B. McClellan, the Man Who Saved the Union* (Chapel Hill, 1941), 268; William Starr Myers, *A Study in Personality: General George Brinton McClellan* (New York, 1934), 247, 424; Randall, *Lincoln the President,* II, 120; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln,* I, 602; Clarence Edward Macartney, *Little Mac: the Life of General George B. McClellan* (Philadelphia, 1940), 309; Irving Stone, *They Also Ran* (New York, 1943), 162, 174. For a contemporary opinion, see W. T. Sherman to his wife, October 27, 1864, in M. A. DeWolfe Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of William T. Sherman* (New York, 1909), 314.

[19] Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals,* 196; "Cutler Diary," 298 (January 20, 1863).

government was willing to sacrifice them by demanding the impossible and by urging McClellan to abandon his cautious defense policy. General Jacob Cox remarked, "If McClellan's data were true, he and they were right. It would have been folly to cross the Potomac and, with their backs to the river, fight a greatly superior enemy. Because the data were not true there was no solution . . . but to give the army another commander, and painfully to undo the military education which had for a year been received." [20]

Another reason for resentment on the part of army men was their conviction, perhaps suggested by officers, that the dismissal was a political move. From one camp a clergyman reported, "It gave pain to [McClellan's] officers and men, who were exceedingly attached to him. . . . there were some who threw up their commissions in disgust, and still more who threaten to do so." A soldier reported to his family, "There is not a soldier I know of but what turns toward McClellan as a last hope. . . . I do not exaggerate the strength of this feeling when I say that were he to say the word the army would turn upon Washington itself and not leave a house untouched or a government official unhung in the whole city." McClellan himself recorded that the removal created a "deep feeling in the army—so much so that many were in favor of my refusing to obey the order, and of marching upon Washington to take possession of the government." [21]

After the Fredericksburg debacle the muttering of the soldiers increased, and Democratic newspapers printed numerous letters from the field angrily demanding that McClellan be restored. In addition to the alarming demoralization of the army, Republicans had to face a growing public desire for peace as well as McClellan's highly successful presidential-boom tour of New England early in 1863. Struggling against the all-but-overwhelming circumstances, Republicans turned the full force of their propaganda upon the civilian public and redoubled their efforts

[20] Cox, *Military Reminiscences*, I, 368.

[21] Rev. [John R.] Adams to his wife, January 1, 1863, in Adams, *Memorial and Letters*, 89; Gillette to his parents, January 20, 1863, Gillette MSS.; *id.* to his mother, January 29, 1863, *ibid.*; *id.* to his parents, February 5, 1863, *ibid.*; Boyce, "History of the 28th Regiment of New York State Volunteers of U. S. 1861—," 159; *McClellan's Own Story*, 652.

to win control of the army. Stanton and the Committee on the Conduct of the War waged unremitting war on McClellan sympathizers among the commanders. As part of this campaign the committee court-martialed Fitz-John Porter, ruined Charles P. Stone, disciplined Irvin McDowell, and caused Buell's dismissal. Constantly they worked to prejudice Lincoln against his Democratic commanders. Some officers complained that their freedom of speech was under attack, but they were frightened into more circumspect behavior.[22]

Others, alarmed by the committee's success with McClellan and others, hastened to join the Radical fold. "Fightin' Joe" Hooker was one of these; Butler had already been converted. Ulysses S. Grant, savagely attacked for Democratic convictions, turned the assault aside by urging employment of Negro soldiers. But Grant obstinately refused to support the committee's attacks on his commanders. Radicals had least success with the doughty General William T. Sherman. Warned first of the Radicals' plans by his brother and later informed by Halleck that Radicals were working against him in regard to the "Inevitable Sambo," Sherman was scornfully indifferent. He replied to Halleck, ". . . not being dependent on votes, I can afford to act, as far as my influence goes, as a fly wheel instead of a mainspring." In 1864 he announced unequivocal opposition to that pet project of Radicals, the recruiting of colored regiments. "The negro is in a transitional state, and is not the equal of the white man," he wrote; "I prefer negroes for pioneers, teamsters, clerks, and servants, others gradually to experiment in the art of the soldier. . . ." The fact that this conclusion was based upon practical experience rendered it all the more influential and the more distasteful to Radicals. Yet they dared not attack him openly; he was too successful.[23]

[22] Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*, 94–104, 192–93, 224–29, 239, 242–43; Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 113–14; Williams, "Voters in Blue," *loc. cit.*, 189, 193; *id.*, "Attack on West Point," *loc. cit.*, 501; McClure, *Abraham Lincoln and Men of War Times*, 343–49, 353.

[23] Williams, *Lincoln and the Radicals*, 270–71, 335–38; Stanton to Ulysses S. Grant, June 15, 1864, Edwin M. Stanton Letter Books (1839–70), III, Pt. 1, Library of Congress; John Sherman to W. T. Sherman, September 23, 1862, in Rachel Sherman Thorndike (ed.), *The Sherman Letters, Correspondence between General and Senator Sherman from 1837 to 1891* (New York, 1894), 164; H. W. Halleck to W. T. Sherman, December 30, 1864, in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*

National Archives

Left to right, above, William T. Sherman, Richard J. Oglesby; *below*, Oliver P. Morton, N. P. Chipman

Certainly many were swayed by the pressure—if not to join the Radicals, at least to support the administration. "I have learned from experience," wrote a Republican from the field, regarding the development of both army and civilian sentiment, that "much, very much for good or evil, depends upon the example and teaching of our generals." Having reached the same conclusion, the administration granted appointments and promotions only to its adherents. One general later complained that "commissions became political patronage and promotions the reward of partisan zeal." Governor Morton began appointing only party adherents. Stanton frankly admitted that his motive for removing one general was political; the promotion of two men for this reason in 1863 drew a strong protest from General Sherman.[24]

The new policy was an important factor in changing the political complexion of the army. Many ambitious men who hoped for promotion sent letters to friends and family at home professing—for publication in the local newspaper—their undying loyalty to the administration. Upon reading such a letter from Democratic Lucius Fairchild, a friend laughingly remarked, "Lushe wants to be a Brigadier General that's what ails him." One newspaper later scornfully condemned "that innumerable small fry of colonels aspiring to be brigadiers, and brigadiers aspiring to be major generals, who have filled the papers in favor of Mr. Lincoln and his policy during the past unhappy three years of civil strife." [25]

(Washington, 1880–1901), Ser. 1, XLIV, 836 (hereinafter cited as *Official Records*); *id.* to Halleck, January 12, 1865, *ibid.*, XLVII, Pt. 2, p. 36; W. T. Sherman to John A. Spooner, agent for Massachusetts, July 30, 1864, in New York *Times*, August 16, 1864 (see also editorial in same issue).

[24] Thomas G. Allen to Trumbull, December 15, 1862, Trumbull MSS.; address at a meeting of the Army of the Potomac at Baltimore, Washington *National Tribune*, May 14, 1885; John M. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army* (New York and Chicago, 1887), 517; Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 166–72; William Dudley Foulke, *Life of Oliver P. Morton, Including his Important Speeches* (Indianapolis, 1899), 2 vols., I, 171; Sumner to Butler, January 8, 1863, in Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, II, 550; W. T. Sherman to Col. J. A. Hardee, Inspector General, July 25, 1864, in *Official Records*, Ser. 1, XXXVIII, Pt. 5, p. 247; Lincoln to W. T. Sherman, July 26, 1864; *ibid.*, 259; Cox, *Military Reminiscences*, II, 161, 251; James McQuade to "General," December 5, 1866, Andrew Johnson MSS. (1831–91), Library of Congress.

[25] J. M. Flower to Lucius Fairchild, March 26, 1863, Lucius Fairchild MSS. (1830–1923), Library of Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison; New York *World*, September 5, 1864.

Their first objective accomplished, Republicans took further steps to change the views of the soldiers, particularly in the Army of the Potomac. Party leaders, convinced that Democratic generals had been blocking the circulation of Republican newspapers, attributed the increasing dissatisfaction among enlisted men to the constant dissemination of Democratic propaganda. One of them complained to his diary, "Our Potomac army . . . seems to be demoralized by the political influences that have been brought to bear upon it." Republicans complained at a secret caucus that "large numbers of the [New York] *Herald* and *World* were circulated gratuitously among the soldiers, while other papers were practically excluded." At a subsequent caucus they resolved that measures should be taken to suppress such journals and rejoiced at a report that Hooker "was quite desirous to exclude the treasonable papers." Shortly afterward a government order forbade the forwarding of any newspapers to the army until "further orders." The New York *World* angrily predicted that the absence of newspapers would "embitter . . . the soldiers who will learn all the government wishes they would not learn from their private correspondence and by report." [26]

However, the Republican plan was not to deprive the soldiers of reading material but merely to change its character. Soon Democrats were complaining that many commanders encouraged the circulation of Republican journals and blocked those that criticized the administration. When the report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War appeared, Republicans circulated it extensively in the Army of the Potomac, hoping that its caustic criticism of McClellan's policy might chill the soldiers' affection for the general. An Illinois postmaster, offering his aid to "concentrate congressional matter" in the army, announced that he had a list of regiments for "the whole Army of the West. . . . I think we should take pains to circulate matter among the soldiers this winter." [27]

One of the major purposes of the Loyal Publication Society, organized early in 1863, was to distribute material of "unqualified

[26] "Cutler Diary," 298–302 (January 21, 24, February 7, 1863); New York *World*, February 16, 1863.

[27] Detroit *Free Press*, April 17, 1863; D. S. Leinigan to Trumbull, December 3, 1862, Trumbull MSS.

loyalty" among the troops in order to offset "the efforts now being made by the enemies of the government." This society was one of the most important and active of the propagandizing agencies, and almost every one of its pamphlets was directly designed to improve the soldiers' morale. By April, 1863, it had thirty-six thousand journals ready for distribution in the Army of the Rappahannock. The organization's material, which was usually well organized and written, emphasized Northern stability, Copperhead treachery, Southern perfidy, the soldiers' loyalty, and moral issues. Slowly and carefully it developed the antislavery theme.[28]

These efforts soon began to produce the desired effect. Not that the armies were changed overnight into Republican machines; the soldiers continued their vehement campfire debates on war aims and sometimes expressed hostility to their commanders because of divergent political views. One soldier wrote to his mother, ". . . perhaps the greater part of our present difficulties grow out of the fact that our soldiers are too intelligent, for they will talk and they will write, and read the papers." A growing number of those written expressions that flowed into the press asserted that the Democrats were sabotaging the war effort, an indication that Republican propaganda was taking hold.[29]

The army's expanding confidence in the President's sincerity and solid ability may have had much to do with the gradual shift in political opinion. Lincoln was honestly interested in the reactions and grievances of the man in the field; he welcomed every opportunity to chat with him and learn his views. The President's reviews of the troops on his visits to camp aroused tremendous enthusiasm; apparently the soldiers perceived and appreciated his common touch. One soldier who was no enthusiast for the Emancipation Proclamation, and who denounced "those legislators who have made the 'nigger' the all-important question," had only praise for Lincoln:

[28] Frank Freidel, "The Loyal Publication Society; a Pro-Union Propaganda Agency," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXVI (1939), 359–76.

[29] Williams, "Voters in Blue," *loc. cit.*, 187; Thomas Kilby Smith to his mother, February 4, 1863, in Walter George Smith (ed.), *Life and Letters of Thomas Kilby Smith, Brevet Major General United States Volunteers, 1820–1877* (New York and London, 1898), 269.

> Old Abe was here a few days ago and saw for himself the state of things. He, we are all convinced, is the soldier's friend, and the man alone above all in the right place. We feel that he takes an interest in us, and that he has done what not one of ten thousand in a similar position would have brains enough to think of doing i. e. to take nobody's word, or reports got up for effect. He came and saw for himself.
>
> Talk of McClellan's popularity among the soldiers. It will never measure 1/100th part of Honest Abe's. Such cheers as greeted him never tickled the ears of Napoleon in his palmiest days.[30]

Moreover, Lincoln's willingness to give veterans personal recommendations for transmission to executive officers did his party no harm.[31] Finally, his letter urging that veterans be given preference in government appointments was a masterly stroke. A Cincinnati adherent, conveying a warning from Ohio's governor that Democratic soldiers were still incensed over McClellan's removal, urged the President to write a recommendation for a disabled veteran and include some statement of general policy. Lincoln assented, and wrote to Postmaster General Montgomery Blair a letter that received immediate newspaper publicity. After mentioning that he had endorsed two recommendations of soldiers' widows for postmasterships, the President continued, "These cases occurring on the same day brought me to reflect more attentively than I had before done, as to what is fairly due from us here in the dispensing of patronage toward the men, who, by fighting our battles, bear the chief burden of saving our country. My conclusion is that, other claims and qualifications being equal, they have the better right; and this is especially applicable to the disabled soldier and the deceased soldier's family." [32]

Once certain that the troops could be depended upon to support the administration, the party planned to capitalize on their approval. The question of granting them suffrage had arisen early in the war; but so long as Democrats controlled army opinion,

[30] Felix Brannigan to his sister, July 16, 1862, Felix Brannigan Letters (1861–63 and undated), Library of Congress; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln,* II, 81–84; Rice (ed.), *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln,* 146–48.

[31] Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln,* II, 55–56.

[32] John G. Nicolay and John Hay (eds.), *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (n.p., 1894, 1902), 2 vols., II, 374; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln,* II, 54.

Republicans had opposed the suggestion. Their caucus had refused to support a congressional army-suffrage bill on the ground that "not one man in a thousand in [the Army of the Potomac] would vote for a Republican." When they scanned the election returns of 1862, disastrous to the administration, they realized that in some states the margin had been so small that a favorable army vote might have turned the tide and brought them victory. Some, indeed, convinced themselves that their defeat was largely the result of the soldiers' absence in the field. The troops would have supported the Republicans; it was the "stay-at-homes" who preferred Democratic guidance.[33]

Republicans sought their goal through state legislation rather than through congressional enactment. "It must seem . . . strange . . . that the discord and disintegration of party politics were deliberately introduced in the armies in the field," wrote a war correspondent; "But party exigencies . . . made the Republican leaders feel justified in bringing about the passage of State laws permitting their respective contingents in the national armies to cast their ballots for State tickets wherever they might be." [34]

Wisconsin Republicans were among the first to realize the possibilities of a controlled army vote. The Republican committee chairman, alarmed by waxing Democratic strength, convinced the governor that immediate enfranchisement of the troops might mean much to the party in the 1862 election. The governor moved quickly; he called a special session of the legislature to urge a suffrage bill, and within two weeks it was passed over determined Democratic opposition. Wisconsin troops supported the Republicans three to one. Although their ballots were insufficient to save the party, they did help it retain control of the legislature. Moreover, the army votes turned the scale in many local contests.

While Democratic papers made bitter charges of fraud and

[33] "Cutler Diary," 303 (January 21, 1863); George H. Porter, *Ohio Politics during the Civil War Period*, Columbia University *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, XL (New York, 1911), 96; Indianapolis *Journal*, April 2, 1863; Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 62; Randall, *Lincoln the President*, II, 235; James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress: from Lincoln to Garfield* (Norwich, 1884–86), 2 vols., I, 443; Sidney David Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Period of the Civil War* (New York, 1911), 252.

[34] Henry Villard, *Memoirs of Henry Villard, Journalist and Financier, 1835–1900* (Boston, 1904), 2 vols., II, 200; *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 1 Sess., December 1, 1863, p. 19; *ibid.*, January 6, 1864, p. 108.

intimidation, the law went before the state supreme court. Since the chief justice had just been named Republican candidate for another term, and since he himself needed army support against the confident Democratic nominee, it was not surprising that the law was declared constitutional.[35]

Iowa's governor also called his legislature into special session and obtained an army-suffrage law, which he hoped would avert party defeat. By the close of 1863 the legislatures of Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Vermont, and Ohio had enabled their soldiers to vote in the field; West Virginia included a similar provision in her constitution. In 1864, Kansas, Maine, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maryland, Michigan, and New York enfranchised their troops. Soldiers from fourteen states were able to vote in the presidential election.[36]

In every case Republicans pushed these bills through over vigorous Democratic opposition. Democrats explained their position by arguing that should the army receive suffrage, the administration could easily control its vote. The administration press proclaimed that the issue revealed the Republican party as champion of soldiers' rights; that the Democratic party's stand was but another indication of its sympathy with the enemy.

In New York, Republican newspapers used the issue to identify their party with patriotism. If western Democrats had volunteered as willingly as Republicans, this was not the case with Democrats in New York, where recruiting records of antiadministration strongholds fell far below those of Republican counties.[37] Republicans, convinced that the absence of their adherents in the field had rendered possible Horatio Seymour's election as governor in 1862, championed an army-suffrage bill in the legislature. But Seymour was aware of their tactics and wrote a special message objecting that the measure was unfair in

[35] Frank Klement, "The Soldier Vote in Wisconsin during the Civil War," in *Wisconsin Magazine of History* (Madison, 1917–), XLVI (1944), 37–47; Josiah Henry Benton, *Voting in the Field, a Forgotten Chapter of the Civil War* (Boston, 1915), 15, 23; William B. Hesseltine, *Lincoln and the War Governors* (New York, 1948), 271.

[36] Benton, *Voting in the Field,* 19–25, 38, 306; Oscar O. Winther, "The Soldier Vote in the Election of 1864," in *New York History* (New York, 1919–), XXV (1944), 440–48.

[37] Brummer, *Political History of New York State during the Civil War,* 252.

view of the administration's policy of molding army opinion: "It would be worse than mockery to allow those secluded in camps or upon ships to vote, if they are not permitted to receive letters and papers from their friends, or if they have not the same freedom in reading public journals, accorded to their brethren at home, to aid them in the formation of their opinions. . . . I have noticed, with deep regret, attempts on the part of some of the officers of the National Government, to interfere with the free enjoyment of their political opinions by persons in the army. . . ."

"Those who are . . . seeking an additional term of power," Seymour believed, should not have the opportunity to use the army for "electioneering purposes." [38]

When the bill passed, the governor immediately vetoed it on the ground that its object could be attained only through constitutional amendment. Republicans accordingly initiated an amendment, which the legislature debated early in 1864. Embarking on a vociferous campaign in its favor, the New York *Tribune* attacked Governor Seymour's failure to mention the matter in his message and accused him of trying to kill it "by indirection." While the Democratic press maintained a stolid silence, the *Tribune* begged, "Unionists in the Legislature! We pray you to keep this subject prominently in mind until the right of suffrage is secured to our country's defenders!" The paper reported each step of the bill's passage, insisting that it go through in time for the presidential election. When the amendment went before the people, the *Tribune* directed its editorial pleas to them. On the day of the popular vote, the New York *World* finally endorsed the measure without enthusiasm and endeavored to justify Democratic opposition.[39]

Such controversies, carried on in all the states over the question of army suffrage, gave Republicans the opportunity to impress upon civilians and soldiers alike the idea that they would give the man at the front his full share of privileges. The insistence of the Republican party upon votes for servicemen gave it an important claim to their favor. Posing as the champion of soldiers'

[38] Quoted *ibid.*, 281; William B. Burcher, "A History of Soldier Voting in the State of New York," in *New York History*, XXV (1944), 459–81.

[39] New York *Tribune*, January 7, 8, 15, 26, March 5, 7, 1864; New York *World*, March 8, 1864; Indianapolis *Journal*, February 23, 1863.

rights against Democratic attack, Republicans informed the troops that they were entitled to the army's full support.

State army-suffrage laws differed in the methods which they provided for voting. One such law permitted the soldier to cast a ballot in the field, while another authorized him to cast it by proxy. In either case the men heard much about the virtues of Republican candidates before they voted. "No agitation meetings and speeches among the troops in behalf of the candidates of either party was allowed before the election," wrote a war correspondent regarding the Ohio regiments; "yet so many politicians were serving in the rank and file that considerable quiet canvassing went on nevertheless." [40]

The army vote was most effective in the elections of 1863, when Republicans were determined to discredit Democratic opposition with a smashing defeat. Ohio troops took advantage of their state's new law to record overwhelming opposition to the leading peace advocate, Clement L. Vallandigham. Although this vote did not change the result, it cast a shadow of disrepute over the clamorous peace party. The troops, moreover, made a sizable contribution to the home majority. Stanton, aware that Vallandigham's presence on the Democratic ticket would make Ohio's results particularly important, expanded the Republican total with the votes of troops on furlough. He promised that "every facility" would be "afforded" for the soldiers' return, and he kept his word.[41]

Wisconsin soldiers changed the home decision by retaining in office the chief justice who had confirmed the constitutionality of army suffrage. He won a majority of 7,693 of the army ballots against his opponent's 4,892 majority on the home vote. By this time Wisconsin Republicans had perfected their technique; they won fourteen out of every fifteen soldiers' votes.[42]

[40] Benton, *Voting in the Field*, 15; Winther, "The Soldier Vote in the Election of 1864," *loc. cit.*, 440–48; Villard, *Memoirs*, II, 200.

[41] Stanton to the Hon. R. P. Spaulding, September 10, 1863, Stanton Letter Books (1839–70), III, Pt. 1; telegram authorizing Capt. Otis to permit his soldiers to return home and vote, October 8, 1863, *ibid.*, III, Pt. 1; *The American Annual Cyclopaedia and Register of Important Events of the Year 1863* (New York, 1864), III, 731 (cited hereinafter as *Appleton's Cyclopaedia*); Indianapolis *Journal*, October 21, 1863.

[42] Klement, "Soldier Vote in Wisconsin," *loc. cit.*, 37–47; Benton, *Voting in the Field*, 15, 23.

In the states where Republicans had not yet succeeded in pushing through army-suffrage legislation, Stanton assumed responsibility for seeing that the soldiers voted anyway. In several letters to Republicans he announced his eagerness to furlough enough soldiers for a safe victory; he asked the Connecticut governor what he could do "to assist . . . in the coming election." Upon granting Vice-President Hannibal Hamlin's request for the extension of a Maine general's leave, the secretary promised, "Any assistance which this Department can render in your coming contest you may count upon with certainty." Stanton sent identical telegrams to Major Generals Couch, Brooks, and Cadwalader, instructing them to furlough and provide transportation for all soldiers desiring "to exercise the elective franchise." Hordes of troops poured into Pennsylvania to support the tottering Republican regime. It was probably their votes that re-elected Governor Andrew Curtin, one of the more energetic of the "soldier's friends," who lost no opportunity to visit camp and hospital and to shout for redress of the boys' grievances. Between sixteen and eighteen thousand furloughed soldiers returned to western and central New York in time for the election. The Democratic press asserted that the administration had released only its adherents; Republicans, denying this, insisted that since Seymour had vetoed the suffrage bill, it was only fair to send the troops home to vote. The soldiers' ballots, combined with the revived co-operation of the Thurlow Weed group, elected Chauncey M. Depew secretary of state and strengthened the Republican hold on the legislature. And in all the northern states smooth-tongued soldiers like Logan, excused from active duty to take the stump, shouted that the army loved the Republicans.[43]

[43] Stanton to His Excellency William A. Buckingham, March 21, 1863, Stanton Letter Books, I; *id.* to Hannibal Hamlin, August 20, 1863, *ibid.*, II; *id.* to W. P. Fessenden, August 3, 1863, *ibid.*, II; *id.* to O. B. Matteson, October 16, 1863, *ibid.*, III, Pt. 1; *id.* to Couch, Brooks, and Cadwalader, October 8, 1863, *ibid.*, III, Pt. 1; McClure, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, 245–46; Stanton to Horatio Seymour, October 6, 1864, Stanton Letter Books, IV; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia, 1863*, 689; chapter by Chauncey M. Depew in Rice (ed.) *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, 429; Brummer, *Political History of New York State*, 351; Burcher, "A History of Soldier Voting in the State of New York," *loc. cit.*, 463; Dennett (ed.) *Diaries and Letters of John Hay*, 110 (October 28, 1863); Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, August 3, 1863; Evarts Boutell Greene, "Some Aspects of Politics in the Middle West, 1860–1872," in *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin for 1911* (Madison, 1912), No. 143, p. 68.

In the case of New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, and other states where Republicans were unable to pass army-suffrage laws over Democratic opposition, soldiers continued to receive voting furloughs until the end of the war. Heavy drafts for voting purposes sometimes depleted regiments. A Democratic paper charged that in New Hampshire's spring election of 1864 the administration had spent "some fifty thousand dollars of the people's money" to send several regiments home for this purpose. Another paper reported the arrival in New Hampshire of six hundred soldiers, who made no secret of the fact that their officers had crowded them through on Sunday so that they would arrive in time to vote. In March, 1864, a Connecticut politican wrote to General Joseph Hawley, "Enlistments have taken off all of last Year's majority. We shall have to take home the soldiers again." [44]

Not only did the administration seek the soldiers' votes; repeatedly they used letters of promotion-hungry officers to influence civilian opinion. In requesting such an expression from one officer a Wisconsin politician wrote, "The loyal determination of the army has thus far saved us—letters from prominent Democratic officers, discountenancing entirely the copperhead movement, has [*sic*] checked somewhat the zeal of these pretended patriots and added to their discretion. And to the army we yet must look, not merely for gallant acts upon the field but also for brave and loyal words in writing to be sent home and read by the people. . . ." [45]

Under the tutelage of their commanders, the men flooded the North with letters and regimental resolutions strongly endorsing administration policy. Legislatures with a Democratic majority, especially, were overwhelmed with soldiers' memorials denouncing them for failing to support the war and demanding a change in policy. Republicans insisted that these expressions were spontaneous, but the striking similarity of their phraseology suggests that this was not the case. Individual letters, too, poured from camp to Republican editorial offices. "Send 20,000 of us back to

[44] Villard, *Memoirs*, I, 309; Hartford (Conn.) *Times* and New Haven (Conn.) *Register*, quoted in New York *News*, March 9, 1864; William Faxon to Gen. J. Hawley, March 8, 1864, Joseph R. Hawley MSS. (1842–1905), Library of Congress.

[45] Flower to Fairchild, March 19, 1863, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, February 19, 1863, Fairchild MSS.

Indiana," suggested one of these, "and the cowardly home traitors will not receive the mercy they would have shown to a Southern rebel." [46]

Democrats angrily cried that "artful and designing demagogues" were deliberately misleading the soldiers regarding the opposition party's purposes in order to "draw to their support the political influence and power of the soldiers on their return from the war." Daniel W. Voorhees addressed to Indiana soldiers a spirited denial of "wicked, malignant and cruel" Republican charges, among them the assertion that he had termed soldiers "Lincoln dogs" and "hirelings." [47]

These counteroffensives, however, were ineffectual. If Democrats had found it easy to encourage loyalty to McClellan early in the war, Republicans were enjoying similar success with their propaganda against Copperhead Democrats. Soldiers honestly resented the peace advocates' cry that the war was a failure; the army disliked the implication that it had failed in its task. The following statement from a Connecticut regiment may have been suggested by a Republican officer, but undoubtedly the men sincerely accepted it: "Resolved, that we utterly despise and abhor . . . the effort . . . to bring about a dishonorable peace, which would . . . acknowledge ourselves to have been in the wrong from the beginning, and make the blood of our brave and beloved brothers, slain in this conflict, virtually blood spilled by our own murderous hands. . . ." [48] Moreover, the fact that so many personal letters expressed strong condemnation for peace advocates indicates that soldiers really despised the group. Indeed, so enraged were they by Republican propaganda that when on leave they sometimes engaged in acts of violence against Copperheads. Wrecking the offices of Democratic newspapers became a favorite pastime of furloughed soldiers.[49]

[46] Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 326–31; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 12, 1868; undated resolutions, 1863; Fairchild MSS.; Indianapolis *Journal*, January 11, 20, March 10, 14, 20, 24, April 5, 23, 1863.

[47] Indianapolis *Journal*, March 9, September 16, 1863; David S. Barry, *Forty Years in Washington* (Boston, 1924), 96–99.

[48] Resolutions of the 14th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers, March 24, 1863, quoted in *Mr. Dunn Browne's Experiences in the Army* (Boston, 1866), 129.

[49] Fairchild to his wife, January 30, 1863, Fairchild MSS.; Edward S. Bragg to his wife, December 4, 1862, Edward S. Bragg MSS. (1853–1912), Library of Wisconsin Historical Society; letter of Dunn Browne, February 25, 1863, quoted in *Dunn Browne's Experiences*, 119; Gillette to his mother, July 28, 1862,

Republicans made good use of the army resolutions. Partisan newspapers printed them in full; politicians used them as an excuse for calling mass meetings to urge "support of the army and the administration." "The Voice of the army, and specially of the Old Democrats in the army," one man believed, "will prove potential, and be a warning to rebel sympathisers to 'stand from under.'" Governor Oliver P. Morton found the resolutions of Indiana soldiers valuable in his struggle with a Democratic legislature, and Iowa Republicans used similar material in 1863 to defeat General J. M. Tuttle, Democratic gubernatorial candidate. Army letters, as well as army resolutions, formed an important part of Republican campaign material during the 1863 campaigns.[50]

Nathaniel Hawthorne's prophecy proved correct: during the war both parties began the practice, to be widespread during the remainder of the century, of nominating soldiers in the hope that martial prestige would bring electoral victory. In local and state nominations the habit soon became common. Lucius Fairchild later remarked regarding his selection for a Wisconsin office, "It was deemed vitally important to have some element from the army on the ticket for the sake of insuring its election." The military element was equally important in the national political arena. Early in 1864 the New York *Herald* sounded a note to be heard frequently during the next three decades: "It is such men as Generals Grant, McClellan, Thomas, Sherman, Gillmore and others of like merit who must now rule the destinies of this great country. . . ." [51]

July 18, September 22, 1863; Gillette to "Sally," September 7, 1863, Gillette MSS.; Porter, *Ohio Politics during Civil War Period*, 156, 191; New York *News*, May 6, 1864; Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 308–309, 370–71, 379–80, 385; Gray, *Hidden Civil War*, 141–42, 164–65; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, August 3, 1863; Julius Caesar Burrows to his wife, March 12, 1863; *id.* to *id.*, April 1, 1863, in William Dana Orcutt, *Burrows of Michigan and the Republican Party, a Biography and a History* (New York, 1917), 2 vols., I, 58, 72, 79.

[50] Porter, *Ohio Politics during Civil War Period*, 115; Indianapolis *Journal*, January 20, February 24, March 10, 14, 20, April 5, 23, September 24, October 12, 1863; Nathan Sargent to John A. Logan, April 21, 1869, John A. Logan MSS. (*c.* 1850–86), Library of Congress; Foulke, *Life of Morton*, I, 231–33, 262–63; Olynthus B. Clark, *Politics of Iowa during the Civil War, Reconstruction* (Iowa City, 1911), 190, 193–94, 197.

[51] Fairchild to J. A. Watrous, April 21, 1869, Fairchild Letter Books, II, 597,

From the beginning of the war, the parties seriously considered as a potential presidential candidate every commander who managed to bring himself into the public eye. One observer commented that among the generals "not one of prominence but was mentioned in some quarters as the probable successor of the head of the government." While Democrats regarded McClellan as their best possibility, they did not overlook others. The party made a bid for Grant; in 1863 the New York *Herald* turned from McClellan, its original favorite, to support the increasingly successful general from Illinois. Some Republicans grew disturbed over Grant's popularity among Democrats; but their concern lacked foundation, since he resolutely avoided political entanglements. The conviction that McClellan could carry the Army of the Potomac was a powerful factor in his favor, and Democrats settled definitely upon him.[52]

In Republican ranks innumerable intrigues were afoot. Radicals, determined to replace Lincoln with a candidate who favored their views, cast about for a successful general. For a time one Radical group favored General W. S. Rosecrans. Early in 1863, Horace Greeley, editor of the New York *Tribune* and prominent in Radical councils, sent an editorial writer to the general's headquarters to "take his measure from head to foot" as a possible candidate and to ascertain if he was "sound on the goose? That is would he refuse to listen to any peace that did not provide for the total extinction of slavery?" Greeley's representative concluded that the general was "sound on the goose," but the movement suddenly died.[53]

Library of Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison; New York *Herald*, February 20, 1864.

[52] Adam Badeau, *Military History of Ulysses S. Grant, 1861–1865* (New York, 1868–81), 3 vols., I, 568; James J. Bolles to Gideon Welles, April 24, 1864, Gideon Welles MSS. (1800–78), Library of Congress; Medill to E. B. Washburne, May 30, 1864, Elihu B. Washburne MSS. (1832–82), Library of Congress; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, II, 536; New York *Herald*, March 9, 1864; General John A. Rawlins to Washburne, January 30, 1864, in James Harrison Wilson, *Life of John A. Rawlins* (New York, 1916), Appendix, 433; New York *Herald*, August 10, 1864; Dr. W. I. C. Duhamel to McClellan, August 30, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XVII; James Adams to *id.*, June 23, 1864, *ibid.*, XV; anonymous to *id.* July 1, 1864, *ibid.*, XVI; McClellan to Charles J. Biddle, October 12, 1863, *ibid.*, XIII; Welles, *Diary*, II, 28; Myers, *McClellan*, 433.

[53] James Robert Gilmore, *Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln and the*

Other Radicals considered that the "intellectual sharper," Ben Butler, who was moving in "a continual atmosphere of controversy," would be more likely to stimulate popular imagination. They informed him that a single spectacular victory would render his nomination inevitable. The resourceful general obligingly embarked on a raid; but the outcome, a miserable failure, left his supporters disconsolate. Generals N. P. Banks and Grant also received brief consideration from Radicals, who finally settled upon two brigadier generals, John C. Frémont and John Cochrane, for their standard-bearers. The main body of Republicans, as the Union party, renominated their civilian President. Later the administration made a bargain with the reluctant Radicals whereby Frémont withdrew from the campaign in return for the dismissal from the cabinet of the conservative Montgomery Blair.[54]

Both parties made strenuous efforts to win the soldiers' support. Undoubtedly they were concerned with the numerical effect of the army vote upon the election; but even more important was the effect of army opinion upon the public. One soldier wrote, "Our advice to friends at home on the Great Question of the day goes further than all the Mass meetings that can be held"; and politicians held the same view. "Connected as the army . . . is with every class of society, the influence it exerts upon public opinion at home is vast," wrote a Democratic campaign worker. "Its own sentiment should not be overlooked, nor left wholly to the influences that surround it." [55]

The parties competed for the soldiers' votes from the very be-

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Civil War (Boston, 1898), 86–101, 146; Albert Gallatin Riddle, *Life, Character and Public Services of James A. Garfield* (Cleveland, 1880), 69–70.

[54] Henry Watterson, "*Marse Henry*," *an Autobiography* (New York, 1919), 2 vols., II, 255; Allen Johnson, Dumas Malone, and Harris E. Starr (eds.), *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1928–44), 21 vols., III, 93; *Official Records*, Ser. 1, XXIII, 552; Adam Gurowski, *Diary, 1863–'64–'65* (Washington, 1862–66), 3 vols., I, 86 (January 28, 1864); T. W. Wentworth to Butler, March 18, 1864, in Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, III, 513; E. Lock to *id.*, March 18, 1864, *ibid.*, 553; A. Gurowski to *id.*, September 7, 1864, *ibid.*, IV, 136; R. M. Murdy to *id.*, April 27, 1864, *ibid.*, V., 126; George Wilkes to Washburne, August 31, 1864, Washburne MSS.; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, II, 78; Margaret Leech, *Reveille in Washington, 1860–1865* (New York, 1945), 204–205; Harold L. Dudley, "The Election of 1864," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XVIII (1932), 504.

[55] R. W. Vincent to McClellan, October 18, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXI; MS., in pencil, signed by Daniel Cameron, Chicago, August 30, 1864, *ibid.*, XVII.

ginning of the campaign. The Republican platform expressed gratitude for the sacrifices of servicemen and declared that the nation owed them "some permanent recognition" of their valor. It should make "ample and permanent provision" for the wounded and hold the memory of those who fell in its defense in "grateful and everlasting remembrance." Lincoln was equally gracious to the defenders of the Union in his letter of acceptance. The Democrats extended their "sympathy" to soldiers and promised that "in the event of our attaining power, they will receive all the care and protection, regard and kindness that the brave soldiers of the Republic have so bravely earned." The praise was flattering, but the promises of reward were vague. Only the Radicals made a concrete offer: their platform advocated the confiscation of Confederate property and its distribution among the troops.[56]

Republicans depended upon the "patriotism" of their platform rather than upon the personal popularity of their candidate in appealing to soldiers. Their propaganda disparaged McClellan's military ability, pointed out that Democrats had wished to deprive the troops of suffrage, and insisted that Democrats favored the Confederate cause.

Democrats, on the other hand, depended mainly upon their candidate's popularity. The New York *World* announced that all the administration's power could not induce the troops to vote for anyone else.[57] But the general's long absence from the army operated against him. A soldier warned him, "The army is forgetting you during your retirement. I know the sentiment is changed. Be not deceived by huzzas and cheers." A New York *Times* correspondent, reporting from the field that McClellan no longer had any "hold" on the army, commented, "To those who can well remember the universal and unparallelled [*sic*] enthusiasm which his name once created among our men, the change appears almost marvelous. And yet it need not. . . . McClellan's own men, those who immediately fought under him, have nearly all been dispersed. . . ." [58]

[56] New York *Herald*, June 9, 1864; New York *Tribune*, June 10, August 31, 1864; New York *World*, June 2, August 31, 1864.

[57] New York *World*, March 8, 1864.

[58] "Jersey Blue" to McClellan, July 6, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XVI; New York *Times*, September 19, 1864.

Moreover, McClellan's leadership of a party that gave platform recognition to the peace advocates repelled those officers who secretly supported his political ambitions. Several of his army friends, among them the handsome General Winfield Scott Hancock, begged him to accept the Democratic nomination only if continued military reverses rendered Lincoln's defeat probable, and then only upon a platform demanding more vigorous prosecution of the war.[59] But the War Democrats, having won the nomination, left the war-policy statement to Vallandigham and his cohorts.

McClellan's disavowal of the "peace" planks in the platform failed to overcome the soldiers' dislike of its "Copperhead" character. The general wavered between the two factions of his party. The first draft of his acceptance letter favored an armistice without conditions; this involved the risk of disunion. The second and third drafts moved toward the position of the War Democrats, while the fourth, from which the final copy was made, demanded a guarantee of the Union's indivisibility before cessation of hostilities. In making this pronouncement McClellan paid tribute to the troops: "I could not look in the face my gallant comrades of the army and navy, who have survived so many bloody battles, and tell them that their labors and the sacrifice of so many of our slain and wounded brethren had been in vain; that we abandoned the Union for which we have so often periled our lives." [60]

Despite this statement and the fact that McClellen's friends tried to keep the Vallandigham faction in the background throughout the campaign, the troops could not overlook the platform. One soldier, describing the enthusiasm with which the army greeted news of McClellan's nomination, remarked, "The Soldiers Only have One thing against the Democratic Platform and that is About the war being a failure and about Compromising with armed rebels. . . ." A civilian expressed the same view: "I do not believe McClellan will get the soldiers' vote—they can't sail over that platform. . . ." [61]

[59] D. C. Birdsall, "McClellan and the Peace Party," an open letter, in *Century Magazine* (New York, 1870–1930), XXXIX (1890), 638.

[60] Charles R. Wilson, "McClellan's Changing Views on the Peace Plank of 1864," in *American Historical Review* (New York, 1895–), XXXVII (1933), 498–505; Carl Schurz, *Reminiscences* (New York, 1907–1908), 3 vols., II, 105.

[61] Letter from Camp Burnside, Indianapolis, to McClellan (conclusion miss-

Political clubs for veterans, destined to play a prominent part in campaigns during the remainder of the century, first appeared in 1864. The idea had its inception in the ingenious mind of a Democrat, who enclosed his suggestion for McClellan in a letter to his wife because he feared "the espionage of the Postal Department." Believing that the Republicans would resort to intimidation in forcing soldiers to support Lincoln, he urged McClellan to organize a veterans' society that would counteract their efforts. In order to encourage the men who still favored McClellan despite persecution as well as to make a powerful impression at home, he suggested that clubs be formed in every ward throughout the North for soldiers who were discharged or on leave. The clubs should be furnished with flags inscribed with the army's victories. "This cannot fail to generate enthusiasm, react upon their comrades in the field, prove the best contradiction to the assertion that the soldiers are all for Lincoln and be a most important part of the general plan for a thorough organization of our party in the coming canvass." [62]

The result of this suggestion was the "McClellan Legion," which by October was taking an active part in the campaign. The association's leaders made it clear that the Legion excluded the Peace faction from its support of the party. One of them told McClellan: "We as soldiers—War democrats, if you please, repudiate the Chicago platform, as an insult to the soldiers—stultifying to us and you. . . ." The society's purpose was to communicate with the troops "so that they may be protected in the free expression of their choice for the presidency." The Legion concentrated all its efforts upon McClellan's election; leaders warned members to avoid local political issues in speeches or conversations.[63]

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ing), October 26, 1864, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XC; J. H. Almy to Hawley, September 3, 1864, Hawley MSS.; New York *Army and Navy Journal*, September 10, 1864.

[62] C. D. Despler to McClellan, September 13, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XIX.

[63] Henry Liebeman to McClellan, October 8, 1864, *ibid.*, 2d Ser., XXI; circular, "An Address to the Friends of General George B. McClellan in the Army and Navy of the United States," October 20, 1864, *ibid.*, 2d Ser., XXII; *Constitution and By Laws of the McClellan Legion, New York City*, undated pamphlet filed among 1864 papers, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXIII; New York *World*, September 29, October 5, 1864.

The organization held regular meetings. In an effort to influence the civilian population it staged rallies and parades in northern cities, while to the armed forces it issued material designed to offset Republican propaganda. Under McClellan's management, the New York branch of the Legion assured the soldiers in one address, "the war will cease in a very few months. His policy in conducting military operations—which is well known to you—is a sufficient guarantee that you will, at an early day, be permitted to return to your homes and firesides, there to receive those honors due to men who as soldiers have faithfully and steadily resisted the onslaught of armed treason . . . and who as citizens, by casting their votes for George B. McClellan, have materially aided in reestablishing our beloved country to its enviable position among the nations of the earth." The New York branch also made an appeal in verse form:

Let traitors defame him,
And fanatics blame him
And still seek to set him aside;
We'll soon let them know
By the votes that we throw
That he's still our hope and our pride.
Comrades now in the field
Who our liberties shield,
We send you a greeting tonight;
Forget not the past,
But be your votes cast
"Little Mac," Union and Right.

The New York *World*, urging veterans and the disabled to rally to the Legion, publicized its meetings and reported enthusiastically on its Philadelphia rally. The paper claimed that the society's influence was "tremendous"; that it was "making proselytes by the hundred." [64]

Fearing that the McClellan Legion might do them serious damage, Republicans established a similar organization of their own. In September the following announcement appeared among the political notices of the New York *Tribune:* "We vote as we fought to sustain the Administration and crush the Rebellion.

[64] New York *World*, September 9, 29, October 22, 1864.

Gentlemen who have served in the Army or Navy, Militia or volunteers, are requested to attend a meeting in Room 18 Cooper Institute, this Evening at 8 o'clock, to complete the organization of an active working 'Veteran Union Club.' " In October the society sponsored at Cooper Institute a mammoth mass meeting, which the *Tribune* reported as "a stupendous rally for the union cause." Another Republican veterans' organization was the Union War Eagles of New York.[65]

Democrats complained that the administration deliberately refused them access to the army. The New York *World* stated that in the West the leading Democratic journals were specified by name as banned from army circulation; in the East they were "excluded secretly but no less effectually." The *World* urged readers to send copies of its issues in plain wrappers; these might escape the vigilant eyes of Republican post-office officials.[66]

Despite these lamentations, Democrats managed to circulate campaign material. A report to McClellan on political views in Sherman's army stated that Democrats must counteract the propaganda of the state agents and the members of the Sanitary Commission (a forerunner of the Red Cross), who were working in the administration's interest. It suggested that although citizens could not go to the front, "those who have been in the service, who can gain access to the troops and passes through the lines . . . may with prudent management be of great use." Manton Marble of the New York *World* staff asked McClellan for a list of his friends in Grant's, Sherman's, and Philip H. Sheridan's armies to whom he could "safely send bundles of campaign doc[ument]s for distribution among the soldiers,—as early as possible. We have sent many but want to send more. I have attended to all your regimts." [67]

In circulating literature among the troops, the administration party had, of course, an enormous advantage. Campaign workers distributed pamphlets throughout the armies; one reported that he had given out "nearly a million documents, nearly all to the

[65] New York *Tribune*, September 27, October 6, 18, 20, 30, November 3, 14, 29, 30, December 2, 1864.

[66] *Ibid.*, September 21, 1864; New York *World*, September 21, 1864.

[67] MS. signed by Daniel Cameron, August 30, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XVII; Manton Marble to McClellan, undated, *ibid.*, XL.

army from Maine to Louisiana." In this material Republicans made the most of Democratic opposition to army suffrage; William E. Chandler prepared a pamphlet entitled *The Soldier's Right to Vote. Who Opposes it? Who Favors it?* The indefatigable Loyal Publication Society produced thirty-three pamphlets, nine broadsides, and, for hospitalized soldiers, a collection of songs.[68]

Army-hospital gazettes provided convenient media for disseminating Republican doctrines, and these publications identified the soldiers' cause with that of the party. The Annapolis (Maryland) *Crutch,* rejoicing at the news of Lincoln's nomination, declared, "Take courage, then, oh valiant ones. . . . Copperheadism has been assaulted, frowned down, and writhes now beneath the heel of liberty. . . ." [69]

Early in the fall, the administration requested General Grant's views on the question of voting in the field. He replied that soldiers had "as much right to demand that their votes shall be counted in the choice of their rulers as those citizens who remain at home; nay more, for they have sacrificed more for their country." But he was anxious to avoid anything conducive to political excitement: "I urge upon the other hand that nothing more than the mere exercise of this vote should be allowed." Since newspapers and political documents circulated freely in the army, the men had every means of understanding the issues. No political meetings, harangues, or canvassing for votes, therefore, should be permitted. Grant opposed the admission of civilians to the lines and suggested that officers could handle the distribution of ballots.[70]

Stanton drafted regulations following these suggestions. The Adjutant General's Department announced that the state committee of each party might appoint for every army corps one agent to supply a soldier with tickets for distribution within the corps. The state committees might also select for each brigade

[68] George T. Brown to Trumbull, November 5, 1864, Trumbull MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, October 30, 1864, *ibid.;* William E. Chandler, *The Soldier's Right to Vote. Who Opposes it? Who Favors it?* (pamphlet, Washington, 1864), Library of Congress; Indianapolis *Journal,* July 20, September 15, 23, 1864; Freidel, "Loyal Publication Society," *loc. cit.,* 373.

[69] Annapolis (Md.) *Crutch,* June 18, September 17, 1864; Washington *Armory Square Hospital Gazette,* October 22, 1864.

[70] Quoted in Badeau, *Military History of Grant,* III, 168.

one inspector who would be present on election day to see that all was conducted fairly. No "canvassing among the troops" would be permitted.[71]

Throughout the campaign, each party charged the other with violation of this order. The New York *Tribune* came out almost immediately with the assertion that the Democratic administration of New York was evading it; that the state's judge-advocate had sent only the ballots of his party to the Army of the Potomac. These, moreover, were "Fraudulently and knavishly indorsed . . . 'Union Soldiers Vote.' " Soon the New York *World* took the offensive by publishing soldiers' complaints that army officers welcomed Republican commissioners but tricked Democratic appointees out of their rights. The paper declared that when the president of the state's McClellan Legion was selected as agent, the War Department refused him a pass because of the "personal influence he might have in the army." The *World* complained that other Democratic commissioners had also been denied passes, although they had been appointed according to the rules.[72]

Peter Hogan, Democratic agent to the Second Army Corps, reported that the representatives of his party were strictly confined to one per unit, while no limit was placed upon the passes furnished Republican agents. The latter, moreover, were often permitted to make speeches in violation of the rule. When Hogan arrived at camp, he found himself confronted "by over twenty persons representing the administration, some of whom were clerks from the departments at Washington." In addition to this large force, which was assisted by members from both the Christian Commission and the Sanitary Commission, a very large force was present from various organizations of the New York Loyal League.[73]

Opponents of the administration charged also that members of the Sanitary Commission and the Christian Commission were

[71] October 1, 1864, Stanton Letter Books, IV, quoted in New York *World,* October 5, 1864; Stanton to Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas, October 22, 1864, Stanton Letter Books, IV.

[72] New York *Tribune,* October 8, 1864; New York *World,* October 11, 15, 16, 1864.

[73] Report of Peter Hogan, in Chicago *Times,* November 6, 1864; Indianapolis *State Sentinel,* November 8, 1864.

working diligently for the Union party nominees. The Democratic agent to New York's Fifth Corps complained to Governor Seymour that in passing through camp he met many representatives of these two institutions, all of them "working in the interest of Lincoln. Republican votes could always be procured from them. They were continually discussing political questions with the soldiers, denouncing yourself, and falsifying the position of the Democratic party. These commissions, to which the state of New York has given millions of money, are to-day, through the agents . . . using their influence for corrupt and partisan purposes. You can understand the power of these agencies when prostituted from the beneficient objects for which they were instituted to the uses of the administration." The New York *World*, branding the Sanitary Commission a "Black Republican political club," urged Democrats to "find some other channel" for their contributions to disabled soldiers. The Indianapolis *State Sentinel* offered similar advice.[74]

To the close of the campaign, Democratic journals continued their complaints that the administration was excluding all opposition papers from the army. The New York *World* requested its readers to send soldiers copies of Democratic ballots in their letters; otherwise, it feared, many would be unable to obtain them. In summarizing all these charges the Democratic national committee concluded that the legal rights of soldiers to participate in the choice of President "were menaced and made a mockery." [75]

Republicans made even more serious charges. Late in October the administration ordered a military commission to investigate and try New York agents who, it charged, had substituted McClellan for Lincoln ballots in the original envelopes submitted by soldiers. One of the two arrested at Baltimore confessed to the forgeries; Colonel Samuel North, held at Washington, stoutly asserted his innocence. The claim that thousands of fraudulent votes had been seized produced an immediate volley of denial and abuse from the Democratic camp. In New York the Mc-

[74] New York *World*, November 3, 4, 1864; Indianapolis *Journal*, August 1, 1864; MS. signed by Cameron, August 30, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XVII.

[75] New York *World*, September 21, October 4, 1864; address of Democratic National Committee, *ibid.*, October 31, 1864.

Clellan Legion held an indignation meeting to arraign Lincoln. The New York *World* declared in a three-column editorial that these trumped-up charges were the administration's last desperate chance to save a lost election; the Chicago *Times* pronounced them an attempt to "disfranchise Democratic soldiers." Scoffing at such accusations, the New York *Tribune* published Judge Advocate General Holt's letter to Stanton expressing his horror at the crime. The military authorities, Holt declared, must protect the Union's defenders from these "corrupt machinations." When the military commission imposed prison sentences on the two Baltimore agents, interest shifted to Colonel North, who was awaiting trial at Washington.[76]

Governor Seymour appointed commissioners to carry on counterinvestigations at the capital and to appeal to Lincoln; this committee reported that North and his associates were given "coarse prison rations" and denied communication with the outside world. While Democrats insisted that federal military authorities had no right to try violators of state laws, Washington's chief interest was the soldier vote and the debate over the agents' guilt. New York papers devoted first-page space and pungent editorials to the case daily until the election was over, when their interest suddenly died. North and two others, later acquitted, sued the New York *Tribune* for libel.[77]

In the meantime, New York officials on the Republican side of the fence were working diligently to get ballots to their adherents in the army. Chauncey M. Depew, blocked in his efforts to ascertain the location of his state's companies and regiments scattered throughout the South, found his task suddenly simplified when Lincoln intervened for him. Elihu Washburne had assured him that the President would be eager to help: ". . . if there was no other way to get those votes he would go round with a carpet-bag and collect them himself." Depew next won the cooperation of John Butterfield, the American Express Company's

[76] *Ibid.*, October 28, 29, 31, 1864; J. Holt to Stanton, October 26, 1864, in New York *Tribune*, November 3, 1864.

[77] New York *World*, October 31, November 2, 1864; New York *Tribune*, October 31, November 2, 1864; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia, 1864*, 584–88; New York *Tribune*, March 16, 1867, January 5, 1870.

founder, who personally superintended the safe delivery of the ballots to every New York company.[78]

Once more soldiers from states that lacked army-suffrage laws received "voting furloughs." Governor Richard Yates told Lincoln that the return of several Illinois regiments was necessary "to guarantee success" for the presidential as well as the state ticket. "Defeat in Illinois is worse than defeat in the field," he averred. Morton, eager to be re-elected governor, twice visited Washington to warn Stanton that Republicans could not carry Indiana unless fifteen thousand soldiers came home to vote. Schuyler Colfax requested General Sherman to send nine regiments of Indiana soldiers back; Lincoln added his plea, "Anything you can safely do to let her soldiers, or any part of them go home and vote at the State election will be greatly in point." [79]

When Sherman proved impervious to these appeals, the governor hastily turned to other expedients. He had already received promises that all the hundred-day men would be back by October; these he welcomed officially at carefully planned receptions. Moreover, Morton postponed the moving of recruits from the state. The governor finally won a general furlough for Indiana sick and wounded; he sent out agents for these and arranged for their care and amusement. Under this dispensation, almost nine thousand troops returned to Indiana in time to vote. One soldier wrote, "A great many Indiana troops went home . . . on an order from the War Department . . . that the sick shall be furloughed. Indiana soldiers seem to be rather sickly." [80]

The case of Indiana is only an example; soldiers poured into other states where Democrats had successfully blocked army suffrage. Senator William E. Chandler urged Butler to furlough

[78] Chapter by Depew in Rice (ed.), *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln*, 429–31.

[79] Richard Yates to Lincoln, November 1, 1864, in *Official Records*, Ser. 3, IV, 871–72; Hesseltine, *Lincoln and the War Governors*, 365–66, 380–81; Foulke, *Life of Morton*, I, 366–69; Sherman to Schuyler Colfax, August 12, 1864, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 238; Lincoln to Sherman, September 19, 1864, in Nicolay and Hay (eds.), *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, II, 577.

[80] Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 460–61; Indianapolis *Journal*, July 21, October 7, 1864; letter from "Soldier," in Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 28, 1864; editorial, *ibid.*, October 4, 1864; Stanton to Grant, September 11, 1864, in *Official Records*, Ser. I, XLII, Pt. 2, pp. 783–84; A. P. Andrew to his sister, October 23, 1864, in Abraham Piatt Andrew, III, *Some Civil War Letters* (Gloucester, Mass., 1925), 121.

all his New Hampshire men; the general received orders also to send hospitalized Vermont soldiers home. An energetic nurse arranged to have all the New Jersey troops in hospitals returned; later some of these men boasted that they "voted New Jersey into the Union." Democrats charged that only those who promised to vote for Lincoln received furloughs.[81]

Pennsylvania's warriors cast their ballots on their home soil as well as in the field. The state had shown a Democratic majority in the October elections for Congressmen and local officials, and party leaders were convinced that home results in November would be similar. Consoled by their success in enfranchising the troops, they were confident that the field ballots would carry the state for Lincoln. But this was not enough; they believed, as Alexander K. McClure put it, that "it was of the utmost importance, to give moral force and effect to the triumph, to give Lincoln a majority on the home vote." The President, convinced that the loss of Pennsylvania's civilian vote would impair "his power to prosecute the war," sent McClure to aid the floundering state chairman, Simon Cameron.

After futile efforts to improve the party's prospects, McClure returned and told Lincoln that the only hope of carrying the state on its home vote was to build up the Republican total with furloughed soldiers' ballots. He suggested that Grant and Sheridan each be asked to send five thousand Pennsylvania soldiers home. Lincoln hesitated to make the suggestion to Grant, so it was Meade and Sheridan who received the requests. Both co-operated, and accordingly ten thousand Pennsylvania soldiers poured into the state to cast Lincoln ballots. And they saved the day for the Republicans, who won a majority of 5,712. The field or "bayonet" total, adding its majority of 14,363, rendered this victory more impressive.[82]

Already disturbed over the "voting furloughs," Democrats shouted with fury when they discovered evidence that soldiers from eight states had voted in the Indiana election. A train bear-

[81] William E. Chandler to Butler, October 22, 1864, in Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence*, V, 277; Samuel Breck to *id.*, October 31, 1864, *ibid.*, 306; Washington *National Tribune*, September 25, 1864; New York *World*, October 31, 1864.

[82] McClure, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, 183–88; New York *Tribune*, November 12, 21, 1864; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia, 1864*, 650.

ing Michigan troops through Indiana on election day, they claimed, had stopped at various points to permit the men to vote. Democratic journals published numerous soldiers' letters supporting these charges; one of them asserted that the "60th Massachusetts cast about six thousand votes for Governor Morton. . . ." In another, George Stumpf, member of the Seventh Pennsylvania Cavalry and resident of Pittsburgh, stated that on election day he arrived in Indianapolis on a train bearing some two thousand troops. At the station they were hurried into waiting carriages and driven to the polls, where "many of the soldiers voted twice and three times. We handed our votes into a window, and nobody asked us whether we had a right to vote or whether we formerly resided in the state. Afterwards we were treated with ale and all other things you might eat and drink. I am convinced that every soldier of the two thousand voted once and many two or three times, although we belonged to the Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and other states. Besides us in Indianapolis also voted about two thousand invalids belonging to other States." [83]

One Republican paper, cheerfully admitting the fraud, insisted that in such an issue the end justified the means: "It were better that half a dozen Massachusetts regiments should vote, than that the state should fall into the hands of the opponents of the administration. Does anyone think that the administration is going to allow the state of Indiana to fall into the hands of its enemies at a time like this? The soldiers are in the national service and if they can be used in the rear, to gain a victory which is quite as important as a victory at the front in the field, why not do it?" [84]

The New York *Herald*, refusing to be moved by either party's wild charges of fraudulent soldiers' votes, declared that it was a case of "diamond cut diamond, in which delightful game the administration has been a little ahead of the opposition in getting the first cut." Certainly the Republicans came out on top in both cases of alleged fraud. A student of New York history believes that the result in that state would probably have been different had Republicans not checked the forgeries, while in

[83] Letter, dated October 14, 1864, published in Pittsburgh *Republican*, quoted in Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, October 24, 1864; New York *World*, October 26, 28, 1864; editorial, Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, October 4, 1864.

[84] Indianapolis *Gazette*, quoted in New York *World*, October 5, 1864.

Indiana the soldiers' ballots helped produce Morton's majority of 20,883. One serviceman was convinced that in the latter state "the soldiers' vote had much to do with the result." Indiana Democrats attributed their defeat to "frauds extending to almost every point where railroad facilities enabled the guilty parties to transfer voters from point to point." [85]

The administration relied upon the army's persuasive power as well as on its ballots. With military success, Sherman became more co-operative; and a number of fluent "political" commanders, among them General Logan and Colonel Benjamin Harrison, loosed their oratory on the home front. Logan more than justified his leave; he carried for the Republicans, by an almost four-to-one vote, the district that in 1860 sent him to Congress as a Democrat. The New York *World* cried in alarm that hundreds of Republican officers were leaving their posts "to stump the canvass for Lincoln's re-election." [86]

Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana recorded a brief note on the Department's feverish activities to make the soldiers count in the campaign: "There was a constant succession of telegrams from all parts of the country requesting that leave of absence be extended to this or that officer, in order that his district at home might have the benefit of his political influence. Furloughs were asked for private soldiers whose presence in close districts was deemed of especial importance, and there was a widespread demand that men on detached service and convalescents in hospitals be sent home. . . . All the power and influence of the War Department . . . was employed to secure the re-election of Mr. Lincoln." [87]

Generals who were trying to win the war found the situation maddening. Sherman complained that the authorities were "con-

[85] New York *Herald*, October 29, 1864; De Alva Stanwood Alexander, *A Political History of the State of New York* (New York, 1906–1909), 3 vols., III, 124; Andrew to his sister, October 23, 1864, in Andrew, *Some Civil War Letters*, 121; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia, 1864*, 438.

[86] Stanton to W. T. Sherman, September 5, 1861, *Official Records*, Ser. I, XXXVIII, Pt. 5, p. 802; Sherman to Stanton, September 6, 1864, *ibid.*, 809; New York *Herald*, October 10, 1864; Cox, *Military Reminiscences*, II, 294; New York *World*, October 19, 1864; Greene, "Some Aspects of Politics in the Middle West," *loc. cit.*, 69; Charles A. Church, *History of the Republican Party in Illinois, 1854–1912* (Rockford, Ill., *c.* 1912), 94.

[87] Dana, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 260–61.

spiring to break up the Army till the election is over. Our armies vanish before our eyes and it is useless to complain because the election is more important than the war." [88]

The amount of space that the press devoted to the army vote indicates the importance assigned to it by politicians. At great length newspapers predicted that soldiers would support their respective candidates. They published countless letters from army men expressing loyalty to their own party and scorn for the opposition. The New York *Tribune* began in September a series of editorials designed to prove that no loyal soldier would support McClellan. The paper emphasized the general's military procrastination, and to the end of the campaign it printed column after column of soldiers' letters to family and friends proclaiming the army's hatred for Democrats. A typical comment was the following: "[McClellan's] success depends upon our defeat. We count that a singular position for a man of his cloth." [89]

Equally emphatic, the *World* came forth with its own set of letters, most of which expressed scorn for Lincoln. "Democrats, keep up your courage," advised one correspondent; "the soldiers are 'all right'!" Many letters, striving to identify Lincoln with the Radicals, insisted that soldiers could not support a candidate who went beyond the original objects of the war. Genuine or not, these letters formed an important part of the campaign propaganda of both sides.[90]

Democrats expressed confidence that officers would support their former commander. Announcing that all the West Point influence was being exerted quietly in McClellan's favor, the *World* stated its conviction that "with the exception of such as owe their commissions to their affiliations with abolition governors and congressmen, there is hardly an officer but would vote for him in preference to Mr. Lincoln." This, however, was mere wishful thinking. No important commanders declared themselves openly for McClellan. Rosecrans, it is true, had no enthusiasm for the Republican nominees, but he shunned alliance with the op-

[88] W. T. Sherman to his wife, October 27, 1864, in M. A. De Wolfe Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of William T. Sherman* (New York, 1909), 314.

[89] New York *Tribune*, September 27, 1864.

[90] "W.K.B." to editor, September 19, 1864, New York *World*, September 24, 1864.

position. James A. Garfield was informed that the general would support Lincoln because he could not "go the Associations which McClellan has." [91]

From Sherman, abhorred by Radicals, Democrats expected at least "perfect fairness" in the collection of ballots; and they hoped for much more. But when a newspaper reported that Sherman had pledged ninety-nine in every hundred of his army's votes to McClellan, the former wrote angrily to his wife that the story was the invention of "some knave." Since the report became current, he remarked, McClellan had written to him twice, and this "depreciated him more in my estimation than all else." He would vote for no one because he was not "entitled to vote. Of the two, with the inferences to be drawn at home and abroad, I would prefer Lincoln. . . ." [92]

General George G. Meade also complained to his wife regarding Democratic claims that he was supporting them, and reported from the field a general conviction that McClellan had "very little chance. I think he is very unfortunate in his friends and backers." Democratic efforts to win statements from other officers, including Hooker and Samuel P. Heintzelman, were unsuccessful. General Winfield Scott refused to preside at a Democratic mass meeting; the venerable General John G. Wool agreed to co-operate with Stanton to the extent of a letter condemning McClellan's military technique. Republicans, indeed, presented an imposing list in contrast to the Democrats' blank sheet. Loyal Publication Society pamphlets quoted remarks of Grant, Sherman, Hooker, John A. Dix, Daniel Sickles, and others sanctioning Lincoln's policies.[93]

In mid-August, before McClellan's nomination, General Grant expressed his opinion of the peace advocates in a letter which received newspaper publicity. The South's only hope, he said,

[91] *Ibid.*, September 15, 1864; R. S. Thomas to James A. Garfield, September 13, 1864, James A. Garfield MSS. (1852–81), Library of Congress.

[92] MS. signed by Cameron, August 30, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XVII; W. T. Sherman to his wife, October 24, 1864, in Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of Sherman*, 314, 315.

[93] Meade to his wife, October 7, 1864, in Meade (ed.), *Life and Letters of George G. Meade*, II, 232; *id.* to *id.*, November 18, 1864, *ibid.*, 242; E. D. Morgan to Stanton, September 15, 1864, Stanton MSS.; John G. Wool, to *id.*, October 29, 1864, *ibid.*; Freidel, "The Loyal Publication Society," *loc. cit.*, 374.

was "in a divided North. . . . I have no doubt but the enemy are exceedingly anxious to hold out until after the Presidential election. They have many hopes from its effects. They hope a counter revolution; they hope the election of the Peace candidate. In fact, like 'Micawber,' they hope for something to 'turn up.' " After this pronouncement, the general maintained a studied silence on political matters; and, according to McClure, Lincoln was uncertain whether the general preferred his election to that of McClellan. As a citizen of Illinois, Grant was unable to vote in the field. Immediately after the election, however, he wired Stanton that it was "a victory worth more to the country than a battle won." Questioned later regarding his silence during the campaign, Grant expressed surprise that doubt could have existed regarding his views. He had deliberately remained silent, he said, because "it would have been obviously unbecoming on my part to have given a public expression against a general whom I had succeeded as commander in chief of the army." McClure may have recorded Lincoln's comment accurately, but it is probably safe to guess that Stanton was well aware of Grant's preference.[94]

Undoubtedly many of the officers were held in line by fear of retribution from the secretary of war, who was busily promoting and demoting commanders to aid Lincoln's cause. John Hay recorded an instance: he informed Stanton that a certain officer's regiment was "all for McClellan" and remarked in the next breath that the man wanted a promotion. The secretary puffed "a long spiral wreath of smoke from his stern lips. Colonel Dandy's dream of stars passed away in the smoke." A henchman, mentioning a number of commanders suspected of Democratic proclivities, suggestively remarked to Stanton, "You . . . will know how to apply the remedy better than I do." [95]

As for the lesser officers and troops, indications were similar.

[94] Grant to Washburne, August 16, 1864, in *Appleton's Cyclopaedia, 1864,* 134; McClure, *Lincoln and Men of War Times,* 189; Badeau, *Military History of Grant,* III, 166.

[95] Dennett (ed.), *Diaries and Letters of John Hay,* 229; Morgan to Stanton, September 15, 1864, Stanton MSS.; Meade to his wife, November 20, 1864, in Meade (ed.), *Life and Letters of George G. Meade,* II, 244–45; Stanton's memorandum of Governor A. G. Curtin's request, March 21, 1864, Stanton Letter Books, III, Pt. 1.

Although McClellan continued to receive assurances of army support from individual soldiers, evidence from their letters to friends and family pointed in another direction. A chaplain wrote, "Not an officer in our regiment will support McClellan. . . . Poor man! The loyal thousands of the army used to greet the mention of his name with perfect enthusiasm." A woman remarked, "Charley writes us with great pleasure of the gradual change which seems to be coming in the opinions of army officers. Those who have always had personal friendship for McClellan begin to see that they cannot vote for anybody on the Chicago platform. . . ." Rutherford B. Hayes wrote to his wife, "The improved condition of our military affairs injures his chances very materially. He will not get so large [an] army vote as his friends seem to expect." [96]

Despite these straws in the wind, as the election approached administration leaders displayed ever-increasing trepidation regarding the soldier vote. Republican newspapers urged their readers to send ballots to the army, and the national executive committee expressed equal solicitude. Stanton revealed his nervousness in mounting irascibility. When a committee at West Point asked McClellan to deliver an oration, the secretary of war demanded withdrawal of the invitation; upon the committee's refusal, he removed the superintendent. Learning from his New York agents that riots were threatened, Stanton instructed Butler to land his troops in New York City on election day. Butler, who believed that the McClellan Legion planned to have the general inaugurated by force if he lost at the polls, was only too eager for the job. But most of his soldiers spent the day crowded into barges and ferry-boats in Jersey waters. They were New York troops who had already voted by proxy; these ballots could not be counted if the men were home during the election. The force stationed throughout the city in readiness to quell rioting

[96] Chaplain Hopkins to E. W. Howland, September 29, 1864, in Georgeanna Woolsey Bacon and Eliza Woolsey Howland, *Letters of a Family during the War for the Union, 1861–1865*, (n.p., 1899), 2 vols., II, 625; A. H. Woolsey to "H. G.," October 13, 1864, *ibid.*, 627; Hayes to his wife, September 19, 1864, in Charles Richard Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States* (Columbus, 1922–26), 5 vols., II, 504.

was composed entirely of out-of-state soldiers and nonabsentee voters.[97]

Chief Detective Allan Pinkerton of the War Department stated that Democratic attempts to win the army vote would not be permitted to "get out of control." He professed belief that McClellan's friends were conspiring Lincoln's assassination and asserted that they would be arrested at the slightest move.[98]

Lincoln, too, was nervous about the soldier vote. Leading Republicans feared the effect of the draft on the elections and begged him to suspend it until after November 3. He refused; General Sherman had wired from the field, "If the President modifies it to the extent of one man, or wavers in its execution, he is gone forever; the army would vote against him." Learning that Rosecrans planned to prevent soldiers in Missouri from attending elections because they might create disturbances, Lincoln immediately informed him that officers must permit their men to vote. In October he concluded a telegram to Grant with the request, "Send us what you may know of your army vote." On the night of the October elections, Lincoln and John Hay joined Stanton at the War Department to hear the returns. Reports from camps and hospitals showed wide differences. The Ohio troops voted Republican about ten to one, but Carver Hospital in Washington, which Lincoln and Stanton passed every day, gave the heaviest opposition vote. Lincoln remarked, "That's hard on us, Stanton—they know us better than the others." [99]

[97] New York *Tribune,* October 1, 1864; Washington *Armory Square Hospital Gazette,* October 22, 1864; New York *World,* September 16, 1864; Brigadier General T. Seymour, *Military Education: a Vindication of West Point and the Regular Army* (pamphlet), Zachariah Chandler MSS. (1854–99), Library of Congress; Butler to Stanton, November 7, 1864, in Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence,* V, 326; *Autobiography and Personal Reminiscences of Major General Benjamin F. Butler; Butler's Book* (Boston, 1892), 753–59 (hereinafter cited as *Butler's Book*); "General Orders No. 1," New York, November 5, 1864, *ibid.,* Appendix, 58; Stanton to Grant, October 23, 1864, Stanton Letter Books, IV; *id.* to Joseph Hooker, October 24, 1864, *ibid.*

[98] Edward H. Wright to George Ticknor Curtis, December 28, 1886, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXXIX.

[99] Sherman to Lincoln, September 17, 1864, quoted in Nicolay and Hay (eds.), *Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln,* IX, 364; Lincoln to William S. Rosecrans, September 26, 1864, quoted *ibid.,* 365; *Official Records,* Ser. 1, XXXIX, Pt. 2, p. 396; Arthur Brooks (ed.), *Writings of Abraham Lincoln* (Federal ed., New York, 1905), 8 vols., VII, 217; Dennett (ed.), *Lincoln and the Civil War in Diaries and Letters of Hay,* 228.

When election day came, the soldiers voted with "quietness and decorum." The New York *Herald*, which in September had insisted that McClellan would win if he won the army vote, admitted on November 3, "It seems that the politicians have laid altogether too much stress upon the army vote. That vote will be unexpectedly light." Hayes wrote, "We had a quiet election here," while General Meade reported, "In the army we take but little interest except earnestly to wish the election was over, as we see, until it is, nothing else will be thought of. . . ." [100]

Soldiers gave Republicans a better majority than did civilians; their vote was 78 per cent for Lincoln and 22 per cent for McClellan, while the civilian vote was 53 per cent for Lincoln and 47 per cent for McClellan. According to one estimate, Lincoln received 116,887 of the votes cast in the field and counted; McClellan, 33,748. Some ballots, of course, reached their states too late to be included. One writer estimated that, altogether, not more than 230,000 or 235,000 soldiers could have voted.[101]

Soldiers' field ballots proved more important in local elections than in the national one. A Wisconsin politician wrote, "The Democrats will carry the county by 150 on the Home vote. Our soldiers we think will save the Union ticket. My election depends upon the soldier vote." One Republican congressman from that state owed his victory to army ballots, as did also several of the state legislators.[102]

Only one state election—that of Maryland—was changed from a Democratic to a Republican victory by the field vote. The issue in this border state was important, since a new constitution providing for slavery abolition was at stake. Southern counties recorded their opposition by large majorities. The total vote was 29,536 against and 27,541 for the constitution. Army ballots, 2,633 for and 163 against, turned the tide in the document's

[100] New York *Tribune*, November 11, 1864; New York *Herald*, November 3, 1864; Hayes to his uncle, Matthew Scott Cook, October 12, 1864, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, II, 507; Meade to his wife, September 17, 1864, in Meade (ed.), *Life and Letters of George G. Meade*, II, 244.

[101] Winther, "The Soldier Vote in the Election of 1864," *loc. cit.*, 455, 457, 458; Benton, *Voting in the Field*, 313, 319; President's Annual Message to Congress, December, 1864, in Brooks (ed.), *Writings of Abraham Lincoln*, VII, 263.

[102] George H. Otis to Fairchild, November 9, 1864, Fairchild MSS.; Klement, "Soldier Vote in Wisconsin," *loc. cit.*, 46.

favor by a majority of 475. In Connecticut the presidential result was probably influenced by the army vote. Some 2,400 of the state's 2,898 field ballots arrived in time to be counted, and they undoubtedly contributed to Lincoln's slim 2,406 majority.[103]

But in general the Republican home majority was so great on the national ticket that the administration did not need the "bayonet" vote. Had the vote been close, the situation might have been different; as it was, Lincoln received 212 electoral votes to McClellan's 12. An important reason was the succession of military victories, which produced a rising tide of Union sentiment. Another factor, of unknown numerical value, was the flood of Republican ballots cast by furloughed soldiers, able-bodied as well as disabled.

If one may give some credence to Democratic claims and the soldiers' boasts, in at least some of the states that lacked army suffrage, notably Indiana, the votes of furloughed troops contributed to Republican success. This may have been the case, too, in states that permitted a separate field vote. Certainly Republicans owed their victory in Pennsylvania's home vote to the ballots of furloughed troops. It should be remembered that disabled soldiers were sent home even to states that permitted them to cast field ballots; Stanton answered Seymour's query on that point in the affirmative. The home vote, therefore, was by no means confined to civilians. Unfortunately, no records exist to show how many of the home ballots were cast by furloughed soldiers. They might well have influenced the result in New York, which gave a slim 6,749 majority to Lincoln.[104]

So far as the figures are concerned, then, the army's participation in the election was insignificant. Actually, soldiers probably made an important contribution to Republican success. How great that contribution was, one can only guess. One point may be emphasized as an indication: administration leaders, convinced that for the sake of morale they must win an impressive majority in the civilian as well as the field vote, worked frantically to bring

[103] New York *World*, October 20, 1864; New York *Herald*, October 30, 1864; William Augustus Croffut and John M. Morris, *The Military and Civil History of Connecticut during the War of 1861–1865* (New York, 1868), 637.

[104] Stanton to Seymour, October 6, 1864, Stanton Letter Books, IV; Dana, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 260–61; *Appleton's Cyclopaedia, 1864*, 588.

soldiers back from the field for participation in home elections.

The Democratic press explained McClellan's failure to win more than a fourth of the army vote with the assertion that nearly all the officers had joined the administration in the hope of promotion. Their men had naturally reasoned, as the *World* put it, that "if we act contrary to the wishes and interests of those commanding us, can we expect them to grant us favors as freely as though we acted in accordance with them?" This may have been a factor in the result; certainly the generals displayed no disposition to support McClellan.[105]

But other factors undoubtedly influenced the soldiers' thinking. First was the series of military victories, which considerably enhanced the administration's prestige. Troops tend to judge the party in power by what they know of it directly, and that, of course, is the military conduct of the war. The victories rendered the second element, Democratic denunciation of the war as a failure, even more unpalatable to the army. Many soldiers accepted the Republican assertion that a Democratic victory would mean the nullification of all the army's sacrifices and achievements.

The final and perhaps most important factor was the advantage that the administration held in appealing to the army. Undoubtedly during the early period of the war the majority of officers and men were Democrats, and undoubtedly they worshiped McClellan. The use to which the administration put its power of appointment and promotion, however, and the advantage it held in disseminating propaganda, gave it a good lead long before the beginning of the presidential campaign. It needed only to hold what it had gained. And on the score of propaganda the administration held the best cards. Democratic opposition to army suffrage, New York draft riots and Seymour's protest against draft enforcement, Morton's proroguing of the Democratic legislature and supplying the soldiers' needs from borrowed money—these were stronger points with the man in the field than the charge that Lincoln was taking his salary in gold while troops were paid in greenbacks, or the drum beating for a leader who had been too long off the stage. While Democratic journals prated

[105] New York *World,* November 12, 1864.

about unfair pressure and fraudulent votes as major factors in the army result, a friend wrote to McClellan, "I regretted the fact that so many of the Army, who have pretended to be, and I think have been, your ardent admirers, should feel compelled, as they say, to vote for Mr. Lincoln on principle." Hayes thought the reason was obvious: "The platform and Pendleton destroys [*sic*] his chances in the army." [106]

The failure of soldiers in general to grow excited over the frantic appeals or the charges and countercharges of fraud was an interesting aspect of the campaign. General Meade remarked to his wife on "the indifference to politics on the part of officers and men. They don't seem to have much respect for either party." Their lack of any material stake in the election may have been responsible. The parties' promises of reward for valor were couched in flattering terms but were scarcely specific enough to attract a single ballot. Those who did vote, however, were sufficiently influenced by the above-mentioned three factors to give the administration a heavy majority.[107]

The results of the active party competition for army support began to appear as soon as the war ended. Soldiers returned home with a full realization of their political importance, and they soon determined to capitalize on the politicians' respect for them. One soldier, discussing the ire of Wisconsin troops against Governor James Lewis for his appointment of civilians as field officers, wrote: ". . . they will remember in coming time the men who thus ignore their claims. Governor Solomon owes his defeat for the nomination for Governor to army influence and his successors should profit by his example." [108]

The parties, on the other hand, had come to regard the troops as a separate group and had begun to develop a special propaganda to gain their support. To appeal to soldiers as well as to impress the civilian population, they continued to nominate soldiers for political offices. Moreover, the campaign of 1864 saw the establishment of precedents in campaign technique to be followed

[106] Earl M. Rogers, "McClellan's Candidacy with the Army," in *Century Magazine*, XI (1890), 959; A. P. Martin to McClellan, November 26, 1864, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXII; Hayes to his wife, September 13, 1864, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, II, 507.

[107] Meade to his wife, October 11, 1864, in Meade (ed.), *Life and Letters of George G. Meade*, II, 233.

[108] J. A. Kellogg to Fairchild, March 19, 1864, Fairchild MSS.

by both parties for three decades. The attempt to influence both veteran and civilian opinion through the formation of veteran's campaign societies—with their parades, meetings, mass conventions, and addresses—originated during the war.

Soldier-politicians who had succeeded in influencing their troops to support the administration saw the possibility of increasing their own political power by strengthening their hold upon soldier opinion. Such men would find it advantageous to maintain veterans' unity, to awaken constantly in their minds memories of war associations. They would encourage soldiers' organizations, to which they might tie their own careers and thereby enhance their political prestige and influence.

By the close of the war, moreover, a group of stay-at-home officeholders had gained considerable experience in the methods by which the esteem of the soldiers and their families might be won. Governor Morton with his endless receptions to Indiana regiments and his loudly publicized efforts for measures in the soldiers' interests, Governor Curtin with his equally well-advertised exertions for their welfare—the techniques of these "soldiers' friends" would become the model for innumerable "veterans' friends." To the close of the century, seekers after votes would display similarly well-aired interests in this special class.[109]

As far as soldier opinion was concerned, Republicans held a decided advantage at the end of the war. Theirs was the party of patriotism, they insisted, the party that had won the war despite Democratic "fire in the rear." The New York *Herald* remarked early in 1865, "United for the maintenance of the Union, the American people unfortunately appear to be united as the Republican party. There is no great opposition, because a party arrayed against that party . . . would inevitably seem to be arrayed against the Goverment." This claim to a monopoly on patriotism, a cardinal point in Republican army propaganda throughout the war, had placed the Democrats on the defensive. Unwilling to relinquish such an advantage, Republicans were to emphasize it in their appeals to veterans until they had wrung from it every possible political benefit.[110]

[109] Hesseltine, *Lincoln and the War Governors,* 316, 340–46, 370.
[110] New York *Herald,* January 15, 1865.

CHAPTER TWO

A Debt of Gratitude

IT BEHOOVES US . . . to see that the crime which has inflicted so much misery and woe upon the country shall not be lost sight of . . . and to prevent the charge that 'republics are ungrateful' from becoming verified in fact." Thus one soldiers' organization announced its intention of perpetuating war memories in order to enhance veterans' prestige and win a substantial expression of national gratitude. The passivity of veterans in the decades following the election of 1868 has led writers to forget their restlessness and agitation during the first two years of peace. The circumstances under which these men struggled to gain an economic foothold in the disturbed period following the war created social and political forces that were to exert a profound effect on national and state politics. The government's failure to provide for their rehabilitation led them in desperation to organize so that as a pressure group they might force the political parties to give their problem attention.[1]

Immediately after General Lee's surrender, demobilization began. In May, 1865, over a million men remained in the ranks; by November there were less than two hundred thousand. In these six months the government had retired to civil status some eight hundred thousand soldiers. They continued to come home in dwindling numbers until by June, 1866, the size of the army was almost normal.[2]

[1] Circular, "An Address to All Honorably Discharged Soldiers and Sailors in the Loyal States from the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League of Washington, D.C.," September 22, 1865, Library of Congress; James Ford Rhodes, *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850* (New York, 1910–19), 8 vols., V, 185.

[2] Report of the adjutant-general, in *Official Records*, Ser. 3, V, 518; Carl Russell Fish, "Back to Peace in 1865," in *American Historical Review*, XXIV (1919), 436; Dixon Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* (Cambridge, 1944), 137–52.

Under the American theory of individualism the federal government assumed no responsibility for the rehabilitation of this horde of warriors suddenly loosed upon the civilian economy. It was assumed to be the personal problem of each to find his niche and re-establish himself as best he could. The government did, however, give the veteran a considerable boost along the path to readjustment by sending him home with well-lined pockets. Undrawn pay, unpaid federal and state bounties, and various other sums often reached a handsome total; the average was about $250. Unfortunately in some cases this money, paid just before mustering out, was transferred all too quickly from the hands of soldiers to those of swindlers. A veterans' paper, warning against "sharpers and plunderers, who watch the movements everywhere," cried: "Soldiers, be on your guard! Watch well your pockets, your new acquaintances, and your appetites." [3]

Welcomed home by elaborate official celebrations, the victors were given every reason to expect substantial rewards for their services. They marched through New York to the booming of cannon under an almost-continuous canopy of bunting; at the Philadelphia review people "poured out from every street" to cheer them. As each Indiana regiment arrived at the state capital, it enjoyed a number of carefully planned entertainments, after which it paraded to the Statehouse to hear an official welcome from Governor Morton. A Wisconsin newspaper announced that guns would be fired and bells rung as regiments arrived, and urged citizens to participate in official receptions as well as to hang out decorations.[4]

In May Washington swarmed with visitors eager to see the grand review of the armies. For two days the troops marched past the President and his cabinet to the clapping and cheering of the exhilarated crowds. Suspended across the Capitol was a long strip of canvas on which was emblazoned the sentiment: "The only national debt we can never pay is the debt we owe the victorious

[3] Fish, "Back to Peace in 1865," *loc. cit.*, 436; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 137, 152; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July, August, 1865; *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* (New York, 1855–1922), September 23, 1865.

[4] New York *Tribune*, March 7, 1865; Philadelphia *Inquirer*, June 12, 1865; Indianapolis *Journal*, July 6, 19, 21, August 18, November 2, 1865; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, July 19, 1865; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 7, 1865; Chicago *Tribune*, July 13, 1865.

Union Soldiers." The New York *Tribune* pronounced the review "such a spectacle as no other continent saw, as this continent will never see again." [5]

In these brief days of general enthusiasm soldiers again heard the praise and promises of reward that had been used to good effect for recruiting purposes. New York's Governor R. E. Fenton, for example, pledged the state's lasting gratitude and promised, "The people will regard with jealous pride your welfare and honor." The New York *Tribune* announced that society owed the soldiers a debt "transcending the obligations of common gratitude." Resolutions of state political conventions during the summer echoed these sentiments.[6]

Once home, the soldiers found these extravagant expressions to be but hollow words. No adequate provision had been made for the disabled; in 1862 Congress had provided pensions for the wounded, as well as for widows, orphans, and dependent mothers of the deceased; but neither Congress nor state legislatures had yet provided hospitals for disabled veterans. And for the able-bodied there were few jobs. Actually America's opportunities in this period were well-nigh boundless. Farms could be started in the great West with but a small capital outlay, and eventually a horde of former soldiers poured westward to become tillers of the soil. Moreover, the nation's six most important industries, rapidly expanding under the stimulus of the war, were to provide by 1870 some 360,000 jobs. Since the veterans were mainly young men, they might have been expected to adapt themselves readily to peacetime careers. Thirty per cent of them had been under twenty-one and only 10 per cent over thirty at enlistment. But the country's expanding possibilities did not improve the immediate plight of the many veterans who flocked to the large cities. The inability of business and industry to digest the returning horde at once produced an alarming unemployment situation. Agencies sprang up, particularly in New York, to help them find work; but these could help only a pitifully small number.[7]

[5] New York *Tribune*, May 24, 25, 1865; Chicago *Times*, May 25, 1865; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 125; William Tecumseh Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman* (New York, 1875), 2 vols., II, 378; Noah Brooks, *Washington in Lincoln's Time* (New York, 1895), 307–23.

[6] Albany *Argus*, June 8, 1865; New York *Tribune*, June 9, 1865.

[7] Fish, "Back to Peace," *loc. cit.*, 437–40; Sherman, *Memoirs*, II, 413–14; Fred

As spring wore on and the number of demobilized increased the situation grew steadily worse, especially in the urban centers. Newspaper editorials testified to the seriousness of the problem. The La Crosse (Wisconsin) *Democrat* remarked that soldiers were sitting "on door steps, and in alley ways, eating crackers, cheese, raw pork, and hard bread." The Indianapolis *Sentinel* commented, "They are . . . cast out upon the world with dreary prospects of making an honest living. . . ." *Leslie's* reported, "At this moment, in the city of New York, there are many thousands of stalwart and educated men wandering the streets, utterly unable to procure employment, even though their ideas of remuneration be ever so modest. This arises mainly from the vast influx of labor let loose upon the community by the mustering out of our armies. . . ." This journal advised veterans to go into the labor-hungry "rural districts." Another paper urged them to migrate to Missouri and Montana; still another suggested that they go to the South. The New York *Tribune* published a series of editorials begging for co-operation in finding work for the returning heroes. "Give the veteran a chance," urged the Philadelphia *Inquirer* in advocating the formation in Philadelphia of veterans' employment agencies similar to those in New York.[8]

The New York *Soldier's Friend*, a publication devoted to the interests of volunteers, declared that thousands were jobless and that it was the duty of employers to give work to soldiers in preference to stay-at-homes. It commented, "They now throng our streets, cars, boats, hospitals . . . but . . . they soon become familiar sights, and we pass them, almost unheeded." Congress added its plea, with the recommendation that "bankers, merchants, manufacturers, mechanics, and persons engaged in industrial pursuits" give able-bodied veterans preference in employment, and

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A. Shannon, "The Homestead Act and the Labor Surplus," in *American Historical Review*, XLI (1936), 650; Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, III, 476; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 172–81; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July, 1865.

[8] Quoted in Columbus (Ohio) *Crisis*, September 20, 1865; *Proceedings of the First to Tenth Meetings 1866–1876 of the National Encampment, Grand Army of the Republic* (Philadelphia, 1877), 76; Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, August 16, 1865; New York *Citizen*, June 24, 1865; *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper*, October 7, 1865; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September, 1865; New York *Tribune*, March 31, May 20, June 9, 17, July 3, 22, 1865; Philadelphia *Inquirer*, July 10, 1865.

that the disabled "should be preferred for appointments to civil offices providing they shall be found to possess the business capacity necessary." [9]

During the summer of 1865 the problem was temporarily solved for those who found work on rivers, canals, lakes, and farms. With the arrival of winter this avenue of labor was closed, and the situation of some became desperate. By December, Governor Fenton of New York felt impelled to issue an address stating that the cases of destitute unemployed veterans "are numbered by thousands, and are altogether beyond the power of Executive and Legislative relief. Their needs cannot be postponed." He urged immediate and thorough organization of local charity.[10]

Many charitable organizations were already holding benefit fairs for the disabled and operating employment bureaus for the able-bodied. These efforts were of some help, but they gave little satisfaction to veterans, who had discovered that people in general were indifferent to their plight. Former soldiers wrote to newspapers complaining that, far from receiving preference, they were discriminated against because employers believed army life ruinous to character. The New York *Soldier's Friend* announced that many such cases had come to its attention, while another paper stated, "The ones who were once so loud in their praise now pass on the other side of the street!" *Leslie's*, admitting the "hard but truthful fact" that employers were prejudiced against the veteran, suggested a reason: the latter had encouraged "a belief in his recklessness. He has felt somewhat proud to hear tales told of his whisky drinking abilities and foraging operations. . . . They have encouraged in the minds of citizens the belief that the army has acted as a school of demoralization, and they are now suffering the results." Even the spirit of welcome faded as former soldiers became a common sight.[11]

[9] New York *Soldier's Friend*, April, 1865; *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 2 sess., February 14–March 3, 1865, pp. 784, 967, 1335, 1338, Appendix, 160; *United States Statutes at Large*, XIII (1865–67), 571.

[10] New York *Tribune*, December 13, 1865; Fish, "Back to Peace," *loc. cit.*, 438, 440; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 190–92; address of Governor R. E. Fenton of New York, December 4, 1865, in New York *Tribune*, December 13, 1865; New York *Soldier's Friend*, January, 1866.

[11] Cincinnati *Commercial*, February 5, 1866; Chicago *Tribune*, August 30, 1865; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September, 1865; LaCrosse *Democrat*, quoted in Columbus *Crisis*, September 20, 1865; *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper*,

Despairing veterans and their families sent bitter complaints to political leaders as well as to newspapers. Jane H. Todd, mother of two unemployed veterans, wrote to President Andrew Johnson of the hordes of officers and privates who could not support their families. She expressed the fervent wish that Congress would "for an hour drop the eternal Negro question and devote that time for the interest of the suffering soldiers." Late in December a veteran wrote to the New York *Herald*, "I notice in passing through the street . . . hundreds, aye, I might say thousands, of maimed soldiers . . . asking for alms." [12]

The difficulty of finding work, as well as wartime promises of political preference, turned the attention of many veterans to political offices. One veteran complained after a month's unsuccessful search for work in St. Louis, "It seems to me that the government officials are neglecting the soldiers who fought and bled for their country. . . ." Early in 1865 the Sanitary Commission's New York employment bureau had written in alarm to President Lincoln regarding the mounting number of unemployed volunteers. The bureau believed that soldiers deserved preference and stated that the government could do much toward educating public sentiment to that end by setting an example. It asked that Lincoln instruct his department heads to exercise such preference, and he promised to do so. After Lincoln's assassination the Metropolitan Relief Agency made a similar appeal to President Johnson; he also agreed to co-operate. In April, 1866, Johnson belatedly instructed his executive officers to give veterans, and particularly the disabled, preference in appointments and promotions. These victories, with the congressional resolution recommending preference, formed the first step gained by veterans in the civil-service field.[13]

Soldiers, taking these promises of preference seriously, besieged

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October 7, 1865; quoted statement of Leander Stillwell in William Mathews and Dixon Wecter (eds.), *Our Soldiers Speak, 1775–1918* (Boston, 1943), 236.

[12] Jane H. Todd to Andrew Johnson, December 28, 1865, Johnson MSS.; W. A. Powelson to the editor, December 29, 1865, in New York *Herald*, January 9, 1866.

[13] John Callaghan to Washburne, December 24, 1864, Washburne MSS.; Winfield Scott, W. E. Dodge, H. Potter, and Theodore Roosevelt to Lincoln, February 23, 1865, in New York *Tribune*, March 31, 1865; Abraham Lincoln to the committee, *ibid.*, March 31, 1865; Johnson to the committee, *ibid.*, June 17, 1865; Indianapolis *Herald*, April 9, 1866.

state and national governmental departments. Politicians were flooded with appeals by mail. Newspapers, adopting the veterans' cause, demanded that officeholders give veterans preference in appointments. But again the servicemen were disappointed. In the general apathy of the public toward politics in 1865, politicians saw no immediate need to buy the favor of the veterans at the price of offices held by faithful henchmen. The Treasury Department, announcing in the press that it received some fifty applications daily from disabled soldiers, coldly stated that none could be considered, since no vacancies existed. At a Chicago reception to returning regiments, Governor Richard J. Oglesby reminded veterans that they must rely on their own efforts; they must not expect to be "wrapped up in a nice gay cloak" and be given "soup . . . with a silver spoon." [14]

Veterans received some offices from national and state executives. Even had politicians showered appointments upon them, however, they would have found it difficult to meet the soldiers' expectations. Many volunteers felt that executives should dismiss stay-at-homes to make way for them. Soldiers had supported the administration by defeating secession, they reasoned; in appreciation, therefore, the administration was duty-bound to give them places of honor and profit. True, the *Soldier's Friend* was ever ready to take up cudgels for its wards, but on this point it turned upon the grumblers. Although servicemen had first claim to government offices, it stated, their services could not be the only qualification for appointment. They sometimes imagined themselves "ungenerously dealt with, when the real difficulty lay with themselves." [15]

The first result of enforced idleness was a tendency toward unsocial behavior. In May, 1866, a group of veterans in Madison, Wisconsin, angered by the city's failure to pay them bounty money and embittered by governmental and public indifference, attempted to fire the place. Although this unsuccessful incendiary effort constituted one of the few acts of real violence imputable to soldiers, newspaper reports of riots were not infrequent, particularly in New York. A member of the Massachu-

[14] New York *Tribune*, July 3, 1865; Philadelphia *Inquirer*, October 21, 1865; Chicago *Tribune*, June 13, November 1, 1865.

[15] New York *Soldier's Friend*, August, 1865.

setts legislature pointed out that veterans had become demoralized and would become more so if the idle in the streets did not receive employment. He believed that some were already unfit to be at large in society.[16]

The more strong-minded, however, refused to let hardships demoralize them. Neither were they disposed to remain passive under what they considered disgraceful treatment from employers and politicians. Gradually veterans realized that only by uniting could they successfully struggle against public apathy. As this conclusion impressed itself upon them, soldiers' organizations sprang up simultaneously throughout the country.

Another reason for uniting was the existing inequality in bounties. As a means of stimulating enlistment the federal government had begun late in 1862 to offer volunteers cash bounties in addition to regular pay, an offer that continued to the end of the war. Many states, also, had offered bounties. Naturally, those soldiers who had enlisted during 1861 or early 1862 felt aggrieved at receiving proportionately less than those who, entering the army later, enjoyed bounties during the entire period of their service. The same situation existed in those states that had offered bounties only during the latter period of the war.

One astute individual clearly foresaw the potential dangers in this development of a politically powerful group firmly united to advance its own interests. In September, 1865, he wrote to the Boston *Daily Advertiser* warning the public for its own good to give veterans work and a full share of public offices. Otherwise, he feared, "we shall generate a faction, a political power, to be known as the soldiers' vote. . . . I wonder if our state politicians remember that 17,000 men can give an election to either party. . . . Unless some action is immediately taken, we shall, in a few years, have the whole country engaged in an endeavor to suppress and destroy an evil which a proper sense of justice and gratitude exhibited now would have prevented." [17] No one gave heed to his warning; in any case, it came too late. In order to win recog-

[16] New York *Tribune*, May 19, 1866; anonymous letter to Fairchild, March 31, 1866, Fairchild MSS.; Sam Ryan, Jr., to *id.*, May 18, 1866, *ibid.*; Boston *Daily Advertiser*, November 24, 1865; New York *Army and Navy Journal*, October 7, 1865.

[17] Boston *Advertiser*, September 8, 1865.

nition of their demands volunteers were already gathering in societies that would exert united pressure on the community, state, and national governments.

Typical of this general movement was an organization formed in New York to deal with the unemployment problem. In August, 1865, a mass meeting of veterans formed a procession and marched through the city "with a view to enlisting the sympathy of our merchants and others." Ten days later another mass meeting organized a society to urge veterans' claims upon the public. The soldiers' resolutions reveal the economic need in which the veterans' movement had its beginning. These announced that discharged soldiers were "making the most laudable efforts to resume their former occupations . . . and the great number of them have not succeeded in getting employment and cannot support their families. . . . the United States Soldiers and Sailors Protective Society which is without any political purpose, has as its object . . . the amelioration of their condition, and the benefit of the country. . . ." [18]

Similar organizations sprang up everywhere. Since neither the federal government nor the various state governments had yet worked out their systems of homes for the disabled, and since charitable employment bureaus found their task overwhelming, such societies served a useful purpose. Moreover, they provided many good times for their members and the general public, since they held fairs, gave picnics, and sponsored lectures in their efforts to raise money.[19] Besides looking for jobs and assisting the disabled and needy, these regimental, municipal, and county associations exerted constant pressure on political leaders for equalization of bounties and for preference to veterans in appointments and nominations. Many soldiers may have joined through a desire to fraternize with their fellows and, in recounting common experiences, to escape momentarily the difficult adjustments to civilian society. But the resolutions of these societies indicate that a major function was pressure for jobs and bounties.

[18] New York *Tribune*, August 11, 1865; Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, August 16, 1865; New York *Tribune*, August 21, 1865.

[19] *Ibid.*, September 2, 4, 13, 27, 1865; Chicago *Tribune*, August 19, 21, 30, September 7, 1865.

Observing this tendency toward organization, a number of ambitious Republican politicians saw the possibility of advancing their careers by attaining prominence in the societies. Governor Morton, who had emphasized his position as "soldiers' friend" throughout the war and who in his January and November, 1865, messages to the legislature featured what his administration had done and would do for the nation's saviors, continued to spotlight himself before the boys. In addressing the returning regiments Morton and his cohorts sometimes made delicate references to political issues; in their replies friendly officers occasionally suggested to their men that Morton would make an excellent successor to Johnson. Early in 1866 Morton discussed with the leader of an Indiana veterans' society various means of strengthening the organization.[20]

Benjamin F. Butler, determined to rise in the councils of his party, also displayed considerable interest in the veterans. He became president of a Massachusetts veterans' organization and made frequent addresses to veterans' gatherings. In Illinois, Governor Oglesby and Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll played prominent roles in demonstrations of welcome to the returning heroes.[21]

General Lucius Fairchild, who had lost an arm in defense of the Union, turned to veterans in 1865 for political aid. Angling for the Wisconsin governorship, he suggested to his army friends that they request regimental resolutions in his favor and that they urge their men to support him. Regiments passed the desired resolutions, which appeared in newspapers throughout the state. When Democrats suggested that these expressions had not poured in spontaneously, Fairchild stoutly denied the implication. In May he visited Virginia to address Wisconsin regiments. When opposition developed to his candidacy, he wrote to the Wisconsin military agent at St. Louis for help. "What do you think of it," he asked. "Will the soldiers allow me to be defeated?" Later

[20] Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 467, 479; Indianapolis *Journal*, November 15, 1865; Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, August 24, 1865; Oliver M. Wilson, *The Grand Army of the Republic under its First Constitution and Ritual* (Kansas City, Mo., 1905), 11.

[21] E. M. Cheyney to Benjamin F. Butler, August 21, 1865, Benjamin F. Butler MSS. (1850–93), Library of Congress; J. K. Herbert to *id.*, May 18, 1865, *ibid.*; Chicago *Tribune*, October 9, 20, 1865.

he sought permission for army delegates to attend the Republican convention. Strong soldier support enabled Fairchild to win the nomination.[22]

Driven to unity by economic need and encouraged by ambitious politicians, the veterans were now fully equipped to enter upon the political scene. Here again politicians urged them on. Fairchild wrote to a friend, ". . . it is a good thing for the army to assume a right to a voice in this and all other political matters— As other soldiers, yourself or any other may want the same influence." [23]

But if some Republicans encouraged veteran unity for selfish reasons, others were not too eager to see servicemen become a force in politics. Ordinarily Republicans would look upon the volunteers as their natural supporters, but the suffrage question complicated the situation. Throughout the war Radicals had been biding their time until they could persuade the country to accept Negro suffrage. By 1865 the conviction was growing upon moderate party leaders also that their continued control of the government as well as the dominance of northern economic policies depended upon giving Negroes the privilege of voting— for the Republican party. With the exception of a few extremists, however, they realized that public opinion was not yet ready for the change.

Indications were clear, too, that many soldiers had developed an antipathy to the idea of Negro equality while they were in the South. Radicals had achieved their aim of forcing the employment of colored troops, but in so doing they had aroused considerable resentment in the army. Perhaps the greatest outburst from soldiers during the war was the one that greeted congressional authorization of Negro recruiting. One soldier wrote to his sister, "We don't want to fight side by side with the nigger. We think we are a too superior race for that!" Another commented,

[22] G. M. Woodward to Fairchild, February 24, 1865, Fairchild MSS.; W. W. Kinyman to *id.*, May 23, 1865, *ibid.*; Fairchild to T. K. Unkine, April 27, 1865, Fairchild Letter Books; *id.* to J. A. Kellogg, June 3, 1865, *ibid.*; *id.* to George W. Sturgis, July 2, 1865, *ibid.*; *id.* to Otis, August 19, 1865, *ibid.*; W. J. Colburn to Fairchild, July 25, 1865, Fairchild MSS.; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 25, June 8, July 24, 1865.

[23] Fairchild to Col. Richardson, June 3, 1865, Fairchild Letter Books.

"Most of the boys hate the blacks and say hard things about them." [24]

Soldiers retained this view upon their return to the North. Touring Ohio in August, 1865, a Republican was astonished to hear former soldiers "indulging in the most wicked expressions against the negro and manifesting a most malignant hatred of him." A contributor to the *Soldier's Friend* remarked that he was surprised "in talking with some of our soldiers, at the ill-will expressed by them towards the negro." The veterans, then, could scarcely be expected to adopt the cause of Negro suffrage with enthusiasm. And in his public statements the popular General Sherman encouraged them in their hostility to the idea. The general announced at an Indianapolis banquet that it was "in the order of Providence" that the white race should rule. He favored education for the Negro, but not "the elective franchise." This was in accordance with his privately expressed view: "Why, in God's name, can't sensible men let him alone? . . . The South deserves all she has got for her injustice to the negro, but that is no reason why we should go to the other extreme." [25] Servicemen respected Sherman's judgment.

Under the circumstances party leaders decided that the issue must be postponed. George W. Julian, prominent Radical, wrote in his memoirs on May 12, after attending a caucus, "The politicians all opposed [pressing the suffrage question] on the plea that it would divide the Republicans and restore the Democrats to power, and we must wait for the growth of a public opinion that would justify its agitation." Horace Greeley wrote to General Butler in the same vein. Julian reported that Governor Morton "opposed the policy with inexpressible bitterness" and made "every possible effort" to "array the soldiers against it." Some politicians settled themselves comfortably upon the fence to

[24] Williams, "Voters in Blue," *loc. cit.*, 200; Brannigan to his sister, Mrs. R. Hall, July 16, 1862, Brannigan Letters; Chauncey M. Cook to his family, July 15, 1863, quoted in Mathews and Wecter (eds.), *Our Soldiers Speak*, 197.

[25] W. D. Dickson to Butler, August 21, 1865, Butler MSS.; Albert Matthews in New York *Soldier's Friend*, September, 1865; Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, July 26, 1865; Sherman to Halleck, January 12, 1865, in *Official Records*, Ser. 1, XLVII, Pt. 2, p. 36; letter of March 24, 1865, quoted in Troy *Press*, January 25, 1890, newspaper clipping in William T. Sherman MSS. (1837–91), Library of Congress.

await the outcome of events before announcing their principles.[26]

Democrats saw in this situation a double opportunity: to re-establish themselves in the public confidence, and to gain the vote of a special group. They could embarrass their opponents by agitating an issue upon which Republicans were divided, and second, they might use the issue to win veterans' support. Stigmatized by the administration party as the opponents of a successful war, Democrats could at first hope for little from the victors of that war. But if they could inflame the soldiers' prejudices against the blacks, they might win the veterans as the opponents of Negro suffrage. Support by this group would remove the odium attached to them for the "peace" platform of 1864. Accordingly Democrats began to agitate the suffrage issue among former soldiers. Jacob D. Cox complained to James A. Garfield:

> They are at work, quietly but diligently in all the counties especially in the Southern part of the state, meeting the soldiers as they return home and approaching them with appeals to their personal prejudices against the negro—they tell them that the issue is to be forced on them whether they will share all social and political privileges with the blacks, and that their only way to avoid such a result is to return to the bosom of the Democracy which is repudiating these leaders who are in opposition to the war. . . . our people. . . . said such influences as the above are being vigorously used and to their dismay they found many soldiers being led off by them.[27]

In their propaganda, Democrats charged that so far as Congress was concerned, the Negroes were the "favored class." Not only did the blacks live in government quarters; they ate and drank at the taxpayers' expense, and their children received free education. "We have not heard of the government supporting the wives or orphans of the white soldiers slain in battle. . . ." A second point was the suggestion of economic competition. Why were so many unemployed veterans in the large cities growing desperate because of their failure to find work? For Demo-

[26] Julian, *Political Recollections*, 263–64; Greeley to Butler, August 24, 1865, Butler MSS.

[27] J. D. Cox to Garfield, May 30, 1865, Garfield MSS.; Julian, *Political Recollections*, 263.

crats the reason was obvious: the horde of Negroes that had poured into the North during the war had taken over jobs "on the farms, in the shop, in the stores, on the buildings, and at the private residences of the employing class." Finally, Democrats publicized the anti-Negro suffrage opinions of prominent Union veterans.[28]

Many veterans, seeing the Negro as a possible economic competitor, accepted Democratic arguments and became virulently opposed to black suffrage. Moreover, they refused to permit Republicans to remain discreetly silent on the subject. Encouraged by wily Democrats, they blatantly proclaimed their views and demanded concurrence from officeholders. Republicans, regarding soldiers as a dangerous element because of their agitation of the issue, discouraged their participation in politics. In the uncertain political situation soldiers would be a disturbing factor. At Washington the quarrel between Johnson and Congress was growing more serious. The President's attitude was substantially that of the Wade-Davis bill, which in 1864 had represented the congressional viewpoint on Reconstruction. But Congress, increasingly radical in sentiment, now refused to consider any program that omitted Negro suffrage. As Radicals grew more vociferous against Johnson, Democrats began to champion him.

With issues thus undefined, Republican conventions would gladly have dismissed the servicemen with formal resolutions of gratitude. But veterans, confident of power in their newly organized unity, refused to accept exclusion from a share of offices and a voice in political affairs. They elected their own delegates to the nominating conventions, and these representatives asserted the soldiers' views.

In the Ohio Republican convention, one of the first to assemble after Lincoln's assassination and the one which marked the beginning of the struggle between Johnson and Congress, soldiers struck their first blow for political power. When it appeared probable that Governor John Brough would be renominated, the delegates elected by the various Ohio regiments and military organizations raised a storm of protest. Hating Brough for his wartime rule of making appointments strictly according to senior-

[28] Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, July 2, August 2, 16, 21, 1865.

ity, they firmly announced that if he were renominated, they would choose their own candidate. When the state central committee attempted to break the soldiers' unity by distributing them among the congressional districts, they hotly resisted; and after a struggle, they established themselves in a position of honor on the stage. The 143 army delegates received representation upon all the committees.[29]

The majority of civilian delegates hoped to avoid a definite statement on the Negro-suffrage question, although the Western Reserve counties had expressed themselves affirmatively on the issue. The army delegates, however, had instructed their representatives on the resolutions committee to "insist upon unequivocal endorsement of the policy of the President." [30] Republicans avoided debate on suffrage in open convention, but in committee meeting they could not prevent an explosion. Veterans came to grips with Western Reserve delegates, and for a time it appeared that two reports would be presented. The convention finally reached a compromise by endorsing the Declaration of Independence, a settlement unsatisfactory to the Radical element. An expression of approval for Johnson's policy marked a victory for the soldiers.

Veterans were no less determined in the matter of nominations. One newspaper remarked, "Some of the military men exhibited a disposition somewhat greedy in respect to the offices." Of the seven nominees, three—including Jacob Cox, named for governor—were army men.[31]

Similar clashes occurred in other Republican conventions, although issues were not in all cases so well defined. Pennsylvania Republicans nominated two soldiers, but after a sharp contest they defeated the veterans' resolution recommending to local bodies the nomination of servicemen for all offices.[32]

Meanwhile Democrats made a definite bid for the soldier vote,

[29] Cincinnati *Commercial*, June 19, 22, 1865; Porter, *Ohio Politics during the Civil War Period*, 205.

[30] Cincinnati *Commercial*, June 22, 1865.

[31] *Ibid.*, June 22, 23, 1865; Columbus *Crisis*, June 14, 1865; Chicago *Tribune*, August 28, 1865.

[32] Chicago *Tribune*, August 20, 23, 1865; Boston *Daily Advertiser*, August 18, 1865; William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York, 1935), 258.

particularly in counties where their prospects were poor. They used two methods of attack. The first was the nomination of soldiers, especially in areas where Republicans failed to remember them. The Boston *Daily Advertiser* remarked on September 29, 1865, "A Democratic ticket in these days without a military candidate is like a hook without bait." New York Democrats, determined to "ride no dead horses," avoided former leaders, announced approval of Johnson, and bid for soldier support with the nomination of General H. W. Slocum. Moreover, they "liberally sprinkled the ticket with blue clear down to the smallest offices." This move drove Republicans to nominate a soldier ticket headed by Major General Frank Barlow.[33]

In many Illinois counties, soldiers were displeased with Republican civilian nominations and set up rival tickets. These received assistance from Democrats, who in some cases made no nominations or fused with the soldiers. Cook County veterans, for example, were resentful when the Chicago Republican convention ignored their suggestions and nominated civilians. The Chicago *Tribune*, expressing alarm at this "slaughtering" of the soldiers, warned the machine politicians to "face the situation exactly as it is. . . . It is no ordinary task they have before them." The *Tribune*'s fears were realized; the veterans called a separate convention to choose their own ticket, and Democrats endorsed their selections. General T. O. Osborne assured the assembled warriors that the sole issue was "between the saviors of the country and those who had fattened at the public crib while the soldiers were fighting their battles for them." [34]

Continued agitation of the Negro-suffrage issue constituted a second Democratic appeal to veterans. Here they struck Republicans in their most vulnerable spot. Accepting Democratic arguments, soldiers throughout the country were expressing decided views on the question. Democratic leaders in Iowa, capitalizing on the veterans' disapproval of the Republican convention's suffrage resolution, conferred with Republican army officers. As

[33] Chicago *Tribune*, September 29, October 11, 30, November 9, 1865; New York *World*, September 6, 1865; Boston *Advertiser*, September 18, 26, 1865; New York *Tribune*, October 31, 1865.

[34] Chicago *Tribune*, October 11, 23, 28, 30, 31, November 1–4, 6, 1865; Arthur Charles Cole, *Era of the Civil War, 1848–1870* (Springfield, 1919), 395.

a result a soldier assembly was summoned to meet simultaneously with the Democratic convention. The belief was current that should Democrats support a soldier ticket, the defection of veterans from Republican ranks would be sufficient to give Iowa a Democratic administration. The soldiers' convention organized the "Union Anti-Negro Suffrage Party" and nominated a ticket composed entirely of veterans. The Democratic convention made no nominations but unanimously endorsed the soldier ticket.[35]

Although Negro suffrage was the only real issue of the campaign, Republicans avoided the question wherever possible in order to preserve party unity. They depended for success on the discredit cast on their opponents by the war.[36] Democrats, piercing this smoke screen, capitalized on veterans' hostility to the black vote and encouraged them to bait Republican nominees with questions on the issue.

Wisconsin Democrats used this method to embarrass the Republican gubernatorial candidate, General Fairchild. The general apparently accepted Radical views on suffrage; but he dared not proclaim them, since he depended heavily on veteran support. Most of his correspondents during the campaign expressed considerable anxiety over the soldiers and warned him to evade their questions. One man wrote, "I find there is a strong feeling among the returned soldiers about the 'negro Suffrage' question no matter whether Democrats or Republicans previous to going out. . . . [We] can get about all the returned soldiers to vote with us but for the difficulty above mentioned." Another wrote, "Keep as shady as possible on the question of 'elective franchise.' . . . If you are forced to an issue on that question it will raise hob with us in this vicinity— Soldiers bolt it almost universally." Democrats made Fairchild's position even more difficult by obtaining soldiers' signatures to requests for his suffrage views and publishing them in all Democratic newspapers. The General, complaining to his brother about this practice, wrote fretfully, ". . . I am paying no attention to them. . . . They can all go to Hell." [37]

[35] Benjamin F. Gue, *History of Iowa* (New York, 1903), 4 vols., III, 2, 3; Chicago *Tribune*, August 16–18, 24, 26, 30, September 12, 15, 1865.

[36] Philadelphia *Inquirer*, August 14, 1865; Boston *Advertiser*, November 7, 1865.

[37] A. McDonald to Fairchild, October 2, 1865, Fairchild MSS.; H. P. Strong to

In Ohio, where soldiers were equally vociferous on the issue, the situation was aggravated by the fact that Benjamin Wade, leading congressional Radical, expected his state to support the Radical cause in the struggle against Johnson. He and his cohorts counted heavily on aid from the gubernatorial candidate, General Cox, because he was trained at Oberlin College, a hotbed of abolitionism. As a result Cox found himself between two fires. Radicals insistently demanded a statement endorsing their views, while Democratic and conservative Republican papers published numerous letters from soldiers demanding his opinion. The general was alarmed at the success of Democratic arguments among veterans, and wrote, "There is real and imminent danger that the soldiers [*sic*] vote will be so divided as to remove from these enemies of the government the odium of disloyalty, and for this they are working might and main." [38]

Cox steadily refused to answer veterans' questions; he believed that a frank statement would play "into the enemies hands." However, when a group of colored Oberlin students insisted upon a reply, he finally submitted to pressure. The general announced that the war had so embittered relations between the two races that fusion into a single community was impossible. With an eye to soldier readers, he stated that the effect of the war on volunteers had been "almost equally uniform in increasing and deepening their pride of race. The fact is one which cannot safely be overlooked in any calculation involving their action upon the political problems before the country. . . ." Radicals were bitter over Cox's "abandonment of principles," but the general held his ground. He wrote to James A. Garfield, "They are crazy to make it an issue. . . . The vote of the returned soldiers who originally went out for the Democratic party can easily be lost now and lost permanently— I do not intend to permit this if I can possibly prevent it, and shall make the securing of the soldiers [*sic*] vote *the point* of this canvass— I am satisfied there is a dangerous ig-

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id., July 31, 1865, *ibid.;* Fairchild to S. M. Booth, October 16, 1865; *id.* to the Hon. W. W. Fields, October 16, 1865, Fairchild Letter Books; *id.* to Charles Fairchild, October 19, 1865, Fairchild MSS.

[38] J. D. Cox to Garfield, May 30, 1865, Garfield MSS.

norance among our people as to the temper and views of the army on the suffrage question. . . ." [39]

As Republican leaders awakened to the realization that the soldiers could swing the election in almost any state, and as they observed the success of Democratic propaganda, they evinced greater interest in the veterans' vote. Falling back on old expedients, Republicans branded Democrats with the epithet "rebels" and reminded soldiers that these men had opposed army suffrage. The volunteer who accepted the "political caresses" of the Democrats, asserted the Chicago *Tribune*, was "totally ignorant of the political history of the past five years!" The true soldier would scornfully reject the "political favors" of those who stabbed him in the back when he was facing his country's enemies. Democrats countered with the charge that Republicans were neglecting veterans in distributing patronage.[40]

Propaganda, however, seemed insufficient. Both parties began quietly to seek control of the veterans' organizations. Politicians also formed new societies which proclaimed the same motives but were actually partisan. These societies, organized and developed by small groups of soldier-politicians to influence state politics, at times became national in scope. So well did they follow the pattern of the nonpartisan associations that members themselves often failed to perceive the ulterior motive. These organizations differed from the soldiers' campaign clubs of 1864 in their permanency and in the subtlety of their propaganda.

In September, 1865, the two most prominent of these societies were organized. Beginning with a nucleus in Washington, D.C., the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League soon spread throughout the country. Its constitution proclaimed the usual demands for positions, appointments, bounty equalization, and care for families of the deceased. The Washington branch an-

[39] Cincinnati *Commercial*, August 4, 1865; Indianapolis *State Sentinel*, August 2, 1865; Columbus *Crisis*, September 7, 1865; F. Ball to S. P. Chase, August 22, 1865, Salmon P. Chase MSS. (1810–74), Library of Congress; Cox to Garfield, May 30, 1865, Garfield MSS.

[40] John C. Bogardus to editors, Chicago *Tribune*, September 23, 1865; *ibid.*, August 17, September 15, 27, November 4, 11, 1865; "W. L. B." to editor, Boston *Advertiser*, September 8, 1865; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 16, 1865; Columbus *Crisis*, October 4, 1865; New York *World*, June 2, 1865; New York *Tribune*, November 6, 1865; Indianapolis *Herald*, November 13, 1865.

nounced, "Comrades. . . . It is for you to say whether we shall be felt as a power in the land. Individual effort is useless, but a well-established combination . . . will be entitled to consideration, and wield an influence that will be a sure guarantee that our rights will be respected, and our demands receive attention." The president of the new organization appointed a committee to encourage formation of branches throughout the country and to invite existing associations to join.[41]

Thus far the League revealed no party affiliations; it differed from earlier unions only in its purpose of becoming national. The organization announced that it would not be turned aside by party questions, yet some expressions were distinctly Radical in tone. The society's officers, moreover, were Radical politicians. L. Edwin Dudley, national president, was in a few months to become organizer of veterans for his party, as was also Will A. Short, another leader. Branches, which sprang up rapidly, revealed Radical tendencies. For example, the Madison, Wisconsin, League was concerned ostensibly only with preference in appointments and nominations and with aid for the disabled. President J. K. Proudfit, however, was a Republican member of the state legislature and a friend of Governor Fairchild. The governor's brother was vice-president, and the governor himself was a prominent member. Short boasted to General Butler that Washington members, although federal officeholders, were Radical "almost to a man." [42]

The United Service Society, also aspiring to national membership, appeared in New York City. Its constitution proclaimed the usual desire to advance veterans' interests. The president, Colonel W. S. Hillyer, a Democratic politician, frankly admitted

[41] Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League, *Constitution, By-Laws, and Rules of Order of the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League* (Washington, 1865), Library of Congress; circular, "An Address to All Honorably Discharged Soldiers and Sailors in the Loyal States," September 22, 1865, Library of Congress; clipping from Washington *Chronicle*, September 10, 1865, in Hawley MSS.

[42] Circular, "An Address to All Honorably Discharged Soldiers and Sailors in the Loyal States," September 22, 1865, Library of Congress; Copy of resolutions adopted by Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League, Madison, Wis., December 20, 1865, Jeremiah Rusk MSS. (1862–98), Library of Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison; Fairchild's certificate of membership, March 19, 1866, Fairchild MSS.; Short to Butler, September 6, 1866, Butler MSS.

that political power was a primary purpose of the society; he suggested that unity would enable the veterans to control the state: "We are gathered here . . . to organize for concerted action on the political contests of the country. We are here, a nucleus around which are gathered, we know not how great a power for good or evil." He warned, however, that a definite political alliance would weaken the soldiers' power.[43] The society, however, seems to have been Democratic from the beginning. Organized immediately after the New York Democratic convention, it echoed that gathering's endorsement of Johnson's Reconstruction policy and demanded that martial law and military courts cease wherever civil government could exist.

The association spread rapidly. By November it boasted between seven and eight thousand members in New York City, and had established clubs throughout the state. Branches had appeared in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, and the District of Columbia.[44]

At the same time there appeared another type of veterans' society, restricted to officers. The stated purpose of these associations was purely fraternal; they did not even propose to exert pressure for recognition of servicemen. The first was the Third Army Corps Union, which was organized as early as March, 1862, to raise funds for embalming and sending home the bodies of officers killed at the front. In 1865, when the officers of the various armies began to establish associations, the Society of the Army of the Tennessee and the Society of the Army of the James appeared. The activities of these two associations consisted of annual conventions and banquets. Their leaders were prominent Republicans; but if the societies had partisan aims, they concealed their purpose well. Another society restricted to officers was the Military Order of the Loyal Legion, which was planned by a group of Pennsylvania officers of "congenial nature" and "good family" who entertained each other at dinner during the war. Agreeing to continue "the courtesies that had been so pleasant in the field," these men decided to limit membership to those who would "harmonize socially." Candidates were ad-

[43] Platform of United Service Society, September 20, 1865, New York *Soldier's Friend*, November, 1865; address, September 20, 1865, *ibid.*

[44] Platform of United Service Society, *ibid.*

mitted only after careful examination of their social and business position; invitations were highly valued because of the prestige attached to membership. Vermont officers formed a similar society, which later expressed Radical views.[45]

Politicians did not encourage open participation of veterans' organizations in the campaigns of 1865, and the partisanship of the two national political societies remained subterranean. The Republican Veteran Union Club, organized for the 1864 campaign, reappeared but was not particularly active. Failure to use veterans as part of the campaign procedure reflected the general apathy of the political struggle. Radicals had not yet a definite issue against Johnson, and they feared the veterans' opposition to Negro suffrage. (An exception occurred in Pennsylvania, where a soldiers' convention met to approve Republican state nominations as well as the party's national policy.) Democrats, on the other hand, continued to emphasize their military nominations and to agitate the Negro-suffrage issue.[46]

The Democratic appeal to the soldier vote failed to bring victory to the party; in most cases Republicans defeated the soldier and soldier-Democratic fusion tickets. In Illinois, where Republicans triumphed over the many veteran tickets, the Chicago *Tribune* lectured veterans mildly for their apostasy. "While we feel gratified at the result," it remarked, "we cannot join in any exultation over the defeat of the military gentlemen, who, acting upon unwise counsels, have exposed themselves to political misfortune." Republicans had won despite veterans' opposition, but they had learned their lesson. The Chicago *Tribune* hastened to assure the soldier that Republicans earnestly desired to reward him and would henceforth give him full recognition. "We are his natural, spontaneous, undying friends." He need not fear

[45] J. Worth Carnahan, *Manual of the Civil War and Key to the Grand Army of the Republic and Kindred Societies* (Chicago, 1897), 68, 69, 70; Robert B. Beath, *History of the Grand Army of the Republic* (New York, 1889), 13, 68; account of C. I. Wickersham, Chicago *Tribune*, September 28, 1887; Carnahan, *Manual of the Civil War*, 69–70; Harrison, *Life of Rawlins*, 331, Appendix, 468; J. M. Bean to William F. Vilas, November 10, 1874, William F. Vilas MSS. (1827–1919), Library of Wisconsin State Historical Society; *Proceedings of Reunion Society of Vermont Officers, 1884–1905* (Burlington, Vt., 1885–1906), 2 vols., II, vi–28.

[46] New York *Tribune*, May 30, 1865; Philadelphia *Inquirer*, October 5, 10, 1865; New Haven *Journal*, quoted in New York *World*, October 5, 1865.

that Republicans would neglect their "debt, both principal and interest, if a reasonable time be given." [47]

Leslie's, commenting upon the number of soldiers on the 1865 tickets, remarked that "to make an Assemblyman of a Brigadier, or a Secretary of State of a Major-General, is rather a singular tribute to a man's capacity to construct a field works, or to his skill in 'changing base.' . . . the sense of it is not clear." The journal warned veterans that they were being nominated only because "of their availability," by politicians who sought "to capture votes through their military prestige." The soldier with "proper self respect" would not permit himself to be used in this manner "for partizan ends." Nevertheless, *Leslie's* predicted that henceforth "no general will be safe from nomination . . . and as for colonels, they will be forced in thousands to lead voters instead of volunteers." [48]

By the close of 1865 the character of the veterans' movement had completely changed. In its early phase it was essentially a movement of a section of the working population to find relief from an intolerable employment situation and to raise funds for its disabled. Soldier organizations exerted pressure upon the parties, including political positions in their employment demands. Frequently they supported the Democratic party because it offered them nominations. Republicans, and especially the party's Radical faction, immediately realized the danger of this combination. In 1865 it had been ineffectual, but in the approaching congressional election of 1866 it might turn the tide against them. By that time Reconstruction issues would be defined and the Republican party perhaps split. Radicals determined to leave no stone unturned to gain united support from such an important element as the veterans. The activities of individual Republican soldier-politicians in encouraging servicemen's organizations further involved the soldiers in politics. In 1865 the foundation was already being laid for a coalition between Radicals and veterans.

The change in policy of the New York *Soldier's Friend,* which had been established in December, 1864, as an exponent of sol-

[47] Chicago *Tribune,* October 30, 31, November 8, 9, 1865; New York *Tribune,* November 16, 1865; W. W. Duffield to Johnson, April 18, 1866, Johnson MSS.

[48] *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper,* September 23, 1865.

dier opinion, was symptomatic of this trend. At the close of hostilities its editor, William Oland Bourne, announced that the paper would be a "home journal" devoted to workingmen's interests. The war was over; the victorious soldier should unite with his mistaken and defeated fellow-laborer in the South, that the two might press their common claims.[49]

During the early months of peace the paper conducted an employment bureau and created considerable interest in a contest in left-handed-writing for one-armed veterans. By August the editor, gradually turning his interest to political questions, had forgotten his championship of the laboring man's cause. All such reforms as the eight-hour day were but temporary, he stated; workingmen should consider, not "some extravagant assumption as to the antagonism of capital and labor, but how they can make the laws of trade operate beneficiently in their favor." His solution was high tariff, an important plank in the Republican platform. He soon moved to the party's extremist wing and gave evidence that he planned to make his paper a Radical organ. Forgetting his suggestion that the working classes of North and South unite, Bourne professed to be alarmed at the danger of releasing the South too soon from military control. The paper was probably influential in winning soldiers to the support of Radicals; by October, 1866, it claimed a circulation of sixty thousand. In any case, the expressions of servicemen indicated a similar transition.[50]

But volunteers had no intention of responding to propaganda and promises until they saw evidence that their demands would be granted. As the spring of 1866 wore on, they became increasingly clamorous for relief from the still-serious unemployment situation; they threatened to turn their resentment against Republicans if political appointments were not forthcoming. Even in the politically controlled organizations, the soldiers refused to submit to partisan domination unless they received recognition. For example, when Republicans in the Wisconsin legislature appointed veterans to minor offices only, the Madison branch of the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League met without the

[49] New York *Soldier's Friend*, July, 1865. [50] *Ibid.*, August, October, 1865.

knowledge of its politician-president and passed indignant resolutions.[51]

The parties, meanwhile, strengthened and extended control over their respective veterans' organizations. Johnson publicly complained that congressional "star chamber tricksters" were poisoning the minds of one veterans' society against "the President and his policy of restoration." Early in 1866 the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League held a convention attended by about one hundred delegates representing thirteen states and the District of Columbia. Its resolutions urged bounty equalization, veteran preference, and a pension increase, as well as the adoption of Radical Reconstruction policies. In February the Washington branch passed resolutions strongly condemning General Lee. This spirit of intense antagonism against Confederates, new among veterans, was clearly inspired by Radical politicians.[52]

The United Service Society also publicized its views. President W. S. Hillyer, addressing the central branch at New York, took a decided position supporting Johnson and opposing the Radicals. The members immediately reorganized the association to include only those who sympathized with these views.[53]

As the break between the administration and congressional Radicals became irreparable, Johnson's champions urged him to gain support from veterans by granting them appointments. One party worker reminded him, "The soldiers throughout the Country have organized themselves into 'Soldiers Leagues,' working together and as a matter of course for and with the party, which supports them. . . ." From Pennsylvania came the suggestion that civilian officeholders be dismissed and soldiers appointed to replace them. "It is the most popular move you can make. . . ." An Ohio major urged that government patronage "be used so as to oust the Radical incumbents and place the lever in the hands of the Administration. . . . The true policy is to fill all positions with competent Army men whom the Senate dare not reject;

[51] *Ibid.*, April, 1866; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, January 15, 1866.

[52] Indianapolis *Herald*, April 24, 1866; New York *Soldier's Friend*, November, 1865, February, March, May, 1866; New York *Tribune*, November 15, 1865.

[53] New York *Soldier's Friend*, April, 1866; W. S. Hillyer to Johnson, February 10, 1866, Johnson MSS.

we can carry two thirds of the nominations for Congress with this help. . . ." [54]

Although Johnson did not make the sweeping changes suggested, he did attempt to curry volunteer favor. Late in 1865 the New York *Tribune* announced that the Treasury Department had discharged more than one hundred employees, partly because of lack of work and partly to make vacancies for soldiers. In June, 1866, another group lost their positions to make way for veterans. In his annual message of December, 1865, the President reminded Congress that a grateful people did not hesitate to sanction measures for veterans' relief. The following April he requested the various departments to give soldiers preference in all future appointments and promotions. When this circular became public, Washington veterans enthusiastically serenaded him.[55]

Servicemen took Johnson's order too seriously. Immediately they rushed upon Washington; less than two weeks after Johnson issued the instructions, the New York *Tribune* commented on the overwhelming number of soldier-applicants. It sorrowfully remarked that less than one in a hundred could receive appointment. A month later the paper announced that the host of soldiers still flocking to Washington to apply for clerkships had embarrassed all the departments. In Johnson's own appointments he favored soldiers; but, unfortunately for him, many of the department and bureau heads had become Radical, and their veteran-appointees opposed him. The New York *World* complained, "Almost every head of a department or bureau . . . is . . . an enemy of the President. . . ." As a result, "Every effort has been made to create in the minds of the soldiers a feeling of hostility toward the President." When Johnson belatedly began sweeping Radicals out of office, these soldiers complained that the Presi-

[54] J. Hoffman to Johnson, February 1, 1866, Johnson MSS.; Dan Rice to *id.*, June 23, 1866, *ibid.;* R. P. L. Bayber to *id.*, March 29, 1866, *ibid.; id.* to Col. Robert Johnson, March 29, 1866, *ibid.; id.* to William H. Seward, March 30, 1866, *ibid.*

[55] New York *Tribune,* November 3, 1865; New York *Herald,* April 9, 19, June 29, 1866; James D. Richardson (ed.), *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, 1896–99), VI, 363; Johnson's circular, April 7, 1866, in New York *Herald,* April 9, 1866; address, April 18, 1866, Johnson MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend,* June, 1866.

dent was discriminating against the Union's saviors. Their societies passed condemnatory resolutions, while Radical soldiers' conventions later charged that Johnson had failed to keep his promise to volunteers. On the whole, Johnson's efforts to win the support of veterans did him more harm than good.[56]

The legislative as well as the executive branch of the government felt the pressure of veterans' demands. The Thirty-ninth Congress seemed eager to honor the victors; early in the session it declared frequent recesses in order that members might greet generals who came to Washington. The bill introduced by the South-hating Thaddeus Stevens was a mere gesture and did not receive serious consideration; it would have confiscated southern property worth $500,000,000 and applied that sum to bounty equalization, increases in soldiers' pensions, and payment of damages suffered by northerners during the war. Congress did, however, resolve that disabled soldiers be preferred for appointments, and also passed two laws liberally revising the pension system.[57]

But at this time soldiers were far more intent upon bounty equalization than upon pensions. "Equalization" became the cry of veterans' organizations, which passed thundering resolutions, held mass-meetings, and showered Congress with memorials on the issue. Democrats in Congress opposed equalization on the ground that its chief beneficiaries would be speculators who had quietly been buying soldiers' discharges. The Democratic press also expressed opposition; the New York *World* sarcastically condemned the "unheard of generals" who were leading a "well organized attack on the public treasury. . . . The fact that they are pressing is an opportunity the Radicals are not likely to lose. The want of something from the Government makes all these movements, according to the Radical standard, thoroughly 'loyal.' " The Republican majority in the House, however, acceded to veteran pressure and pushed through a generous measure. When this bill reached the Senate, it met formidable opposi-

[56] New York *Tribune*, April 20, May 31, 1866; J. M. Stookey to Trumbull, April 24, 1866, Trumbull MSS.; New York *World*, April 25, 28, 1866; Will A. Short to Butler, September 6, 1866, Butler MSS.

[57] *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 1 Sess., June 22, April 30, 1866, pp. 3335, 2287; *ibid.*, 38 Cong., 2 Sess., February 14–March 3, 1865, pp. 784, 967, 1335, 1338, Appendix, 160; John William Oliver, *History of the Civil War Military Pensions, 1861–1885* (Madison, 1917), 20, 22; New York *Tribune*, April 30, 1866.

tion, chiefly on the ground that those who had received a certain sum in local or state bounties would be excluded from national equalization. This provision seemed to discriminate against those states that had granted bounties, and their senators steadily refused to accept the principle.[58]

As the deadlock extended into spring and it began to appear that Congress might adjourn without granting equalization, veterans became increasingly vehement in their expressions of exasperation. They seemed determined to use their political power against the party that would dare to frustrate them, and politicians sensed their spirit. "I can scarcely take up a paper," remarked a senator, "in which I do not find that the soldiers . . . are gathering themselves together in conventions, and forming leagues for the purpose of inducing the government to do them some measure of justice. . . ." Senator Henry Wilson announced that he had received thousands of petitions from soldiers for equalization.[59]

Although they themselves had opposed the measure, Democrats gleefully emphasized Republican division on the equalization issue. The Indianapolis *Herald* asserted that Radicals had no intention of passing the bill because they regarded its cost a "fraud on the negro. . . . endangering the fruits of the war. . . . How many negro school houses would this two hundred millions build!" Senator Lyman Trumbull, of Illinois, was informed that Democrats were "seizing upon this question with all the tenacity and vigor . . . [they] can possibly Conceive." Forgetting punctuation as well as capitalization in his excitement, the writer concluded: ". . . for gods sake . . . save the Soldier vote for i do tell you that the Soldier influence is no small thing in this Country and it must be nursed and Looked after. . . ." [60]

Another warned that if the Republican Senate remained obstinate, the veterans' support would be "precarious." He added,

[58] New York *Herald,* January 16, February 3, 6, 11, April 18, 1866; New York *World,* April 25, 1866; New York *Tribune,* May 18, 22, 24–25, July 6, 22, 27, 30, 1866; *Cong. Globe,* 39 Cong., 1 Sess., May 18, 26, July 24, 1866, pp. 2678, 2825, 4083.

[59] New York *World,* April 25, 1866; *Cong. Globe,* 39 Cong., 1 Sess., July 27, 1866, pp. 4091, 4241.

[60] Indianapolis *Herald,* July 24, 1866; J. W. Crampton to Trumbull, June 24, 1866, Trumbull MSS.

"The country can better afford an equalization of bounties than to *suffer* its *enemies* again to have sway in this fair land. . . . could you be at home here for only a few days, and hear the anxious inquiries concerning this matter, accompanied at times by murmers [*sic*] . . . you might more plainly see that as a measure of *party policy* . . . no bill of better tendencies could be found." Still another announced that the Senate's procrastination was driving all soldiers from the party, "a loss we cannot sustain this fall and carry the state." With such warnings pouring in, Republican congressmen grew increasingly nervous.[61]

Panic-stricken members introduced bill after bill in the House, while Senators Benjamin Wade and Henry Wilson fought a valiant but losing battle for equalization in the upper house. Late in July, Wilson attempted to attach a bounty measure to the miscellaneous appropriation bill, but the Senate would have none of it. Two days before the end of the session, the House as a last resort tacked an equalization bill to the appropriation measure. But still the Senate was firm; and the omnibus bill, which included the Senate's provision for a congressional salary increase, went into conference.[62]

The conference report gave senators a sharp surprise. House delegates, relinquishing equalization without a struggle, had eagerly accepted the "salary grab," although the House had previously defeated the measure with but three dissenting votes. House delegates, in fact, would not permit the Senate committee to withdraw the salary clause. The Senate found itself in the embarrassing position of vetoing a grant to veterans at the same time that it voted itself a handsome sum. Many shuddered at the thought of the soldiers' reaction. Wade declared that the bill would sink the party that passed it: "I should like to receive this money as well as anybody else . . . but. . . . We must in some way get rid of the position in which we are now placed. . . . if we double or nearly double our own pay while we refuse to do anything to equalize the soldiers' bounties, I fear that it will be the last of us. . . ." [63]

[61] Charles Parker to *id.*, July 18, 1866, Trumbull MSS.; S. W. Munn to *id.*, May 27, 1866, *ibid.*

[62] *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 1 Sess., July 24, 26, 1866, pp. 4083, 4193.

[63] *Ibid.*, July 27, 1866, p. 4238.

Others agreed, but the majority voted to accept the committee's report. The House saved the situation by rejecting it and requesting a second conference. This time House delegates submitted a more moderate bounty measure, which the Senate committee accepted. When the bill returned to the House, some members carefully went on record as having voted for the salary increase only because it was included with the equalization measure, which in justice to the soldiers they could not oppose. On the last night of the session Congress rushed through a bill that according to conservative estimates would cost at least $70,000,000. Those members who were returning home to address veterans' organizations and conventions sighed with relief.[64]

[64] *Ibid.*, 4224, 4226–28, 4241, 4242, 4245, 4286; New York *Tribune*, July 7, August 21, 1866.

CHAPTER THREE

The Grand Army of the Republican Party

IT BECAME INCREASINGLY CLEAR during the spring of 1866 that no compromise was possible between congressional Radicals and the President. Johnson willingly seconded their desire to punish the South; but as a representative of the lower-class southern whites, he could not sanction their program for Negro equality. When the President revealed that he lacked his predecessor's tact and political acumen, these extremists became bolder in attacking his Reconstruction program. In vetoing the Civil Rights bill, Johnson played into their hands; moderate Republicans favored the act and joined Radicals in passing it over his head. His action cost him the support of the moderate element of his party. As Democrats flocked to his standard, Radicals hurled cries of "copperheadism" at the politically inept executive.

Many of the Republicans who pushed through the bounty-equalization bill, then, had joined the Radical group; the passage of the measure in last-moment haste indicated Radical determination to gain the support of veterans in the struggle against Johnson. Having won the patronage, Radicals dispensed generous largess to the newly appreciated heroes and gave them recognition in local and state nominations. At the same time they pointed out to soldiers that the President's supporters were those who had opposed army suffrage.

Energetically the New York *Soldier's Friend*, enthusiastic supporter of the Radical cause, warned against Democrats as "assassins of liberty." To these emotional appeals the paper added arguments for a high tariff. Before such attacks the dejected Democrats could only ring the changes on the veterans' opposition to

Negro suffrage and wax sarcastic over the Radicals' success.[1]

Early in 1866 it seemed that the Radical veterans' organization, the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League, would be the agency for bringing servicemen into the Republican fold. Politicians incorporated their local societies into the League, and for a time it assumed considerable national importance.[2] During the spring, however, a new association, whose professed benevolent purposes formed an agreeable cloak for partisan aims, appeared upon the Illinois horizon. Adroit direction was soon to make the Grand Army of the Republic the dominant veterans' society.

According to legend, the Grand Army was founded by an idealistic army chaplain and an army doctor, who whiled away long wartime days in camp discussing a great brotherhood of veterans which might be established when peace had severed army ties. This society would unite the former soldiers in bonds of mutual affection and common memories. After the war Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson and William J. Rutledge succeeded in realizing their idea. Dr. Stephenson, runs the accepted account, spent time and energy on the organization to the detriment of his medical practice, only to see it snatched from his control by selfish politicians. Gradually pushed out of the society, he finally died, poverty-stricken and heartbroken. Dr. Stephenson has thus been enshrined as a saintly gentleman who envisioned and achieved a great national society held together by bonds of brotherly love.[3]

This romanticized tale is but a weak distillation from the records. Newspapers and letters of the period reveal that the struggle among Radicals, conservative Republicans, and Democrats over the Reconstruction issue formed the background for the founding of the Grand Army, while the ambitions of several Illinois politicians ushered it into existence.

The death of President Lincoln had brought chaos to Illinois politics. As the divergence between the policy of the Radicals

[1] New York *Soldier's Friend*, April, 1866; Peoria *Daily National Democrat*, November 29, 1865, clipping in Trumbull MSS.; New York *World*, April 25, 28, 1866.

[2] Report of Committee of Credentials, convention of Soldiers' and Sailors' Union League of Ohio, June 21, 1866, in Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, June 30, 1866.

[3] Mary Harriet Stephenson, *Dr. B. F. Stephenson, Founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, A Memoir* (Springfield, 1894), 51, 59, 61, 67–70; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 13, 1866.

and that of the President became more pronounced, Illinois Republicans divided in support of Johnson. Some wished to abandon him, while others hoped that moderate counsels might yet save the party from disruption and possible defeat. These moderates, however, firmly supported the Freedmen's Bureau and Civil Rights bills, which had been introduced and piloted through Congress by the scholarly Lyman Trumbull, senior senator from Illinois. Johnson's veto of these acts drove Illinois moderates into the extremists' ranks, even though they doubted the wisdom of the Radical program for the South.

Among these Radical converts were those with designs upon Trumbull's senatorial chair. Laying schemes for his defeat, they hoped to alienate veterans' support from him. But Trumbull's defeat was more readily designed than accomplished. Having rendered his constituents long and faithful service, he enjoyed their esteem and affection. Moreover, the shrewd senator had not been remiss in the more practical aspects of statesmanship; his political fences had been properly tended.[4] Trumbull's opponents, however, had discovered a vulnerable spot in his political armor. In concentrating upon the pressing problems of Reconstruction, he had given but little attention to the clamorous demands of veterans for bounty equalization. At the same time the senator, although eager to be regarded as the soldiers' "friend," was colorless as a public personality, and could scarcely hope to arouse their enthusiasm.

On the other hand the two soldier-politicians who were most active in working against Trumbull's interests could both appeal to the veterans' imagination. Severe wounds in service and rapid promotion to the rank of major general had given Governor Richard J. Oglesby a double distinction in the eyes of soldiers. Shrewd, friendly, and good-humored, the portly governor was fondly known as "Uncle Dick." Even more popular among volunteers was the dashing General John Alexander Logan, who stood in the limelight of Illinois politics. A picturesque figure with his long black hair, his flowing mustaches, and his swarthy complexion, "Blackjack" Logan held audiences spellbound with flamboyant oratory. His military career was sufficiently brilliant to overshadow such minor disadvantages as erratic grammar.

[4] Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln*, I, 390.

Sherman found him contemptuous of "laborious preparations in logistics" but "perfect in combat." Having postponed his career to volunteer, Logan attended to his political fences throughout the war and during the campaign of 1864 left the field to take the stump.[5]

When in 1865 the general returned to Illinois, he was restlessly ambitious; and the wife to whom he returned entertained even more grandiose plans for his future than did he. Apparently Logan's fondest hope was to represent Illinois in the United States Senate. Uncertain whether the Johnson or the Radical group could best further his career, he remained silent on public questions. During 1865 Johnson, either to gain support or to remove a potential antagonist, offered Logan the ministry to Mexico. His eyes upon the senatorship, Logan refused the mission.[6]

While awaiting the outcome of the struggle between Johnson and the Radicals so that he might join the victors, Logan gained Governor Oglesby's support in an effort to strengthen his position in Illinois. Oglesby, who was planning to capitalize on the general political confusion by replacing Trumbull in the Senate with a military candidate, believed—for the moment at least—that Logan had the best chance of success against the senator. The governor adopted his cause in earnest, and soon Trumbull's henchmen were warning the senator of the intrigues afoot against him.[7]

Believing soldier support to be of vital importance, Oglesby obtained an appointment for Logan to lecture throughout the state in behalf of a soldiers' orphans' home. While Trumbull's advocates worried about Logan's increasing popularity among veterans, the two schemers turned to the possibility of uniting servicemen in an ostensibly charitable but basically political organization.[8]

[5] *Dictionary of American Biography*, XIII, 648; *ibid.*, XI, 364; Chicago *Tribune*, October 1, 1866; *Report of Proceedings of Annual Meetings, Society of the Army of the Tennessee* (1866–1908), *19th Annual Meeting*, 1877, 59; Sherman, *Memoirs*, II, 86.

[6] Chicago *Tribune*, November 16, 18, 1865; Indianapolis *Journal*, November 3, 20, 22, December 14, 20, 1865; Indianapolis *Daily Herald*, December 11, 1865; Chicago *Tribune*, November 3, 1865; A. J. Allen to Johnson, May 21, 1866, Johnson MSS.

[7] Munn to Trumbull, May 27, 1866, Trumbull MSS.

[8] D. L. Phillips to Trumbull, January 6, 1866, *ibid.*; C. D. Hay to *id.*, January 7, 1866, *ibid.* Phillips to *id.*, January 16, 1866, *ibid.*; Munn to *id.*, May 27, 1866, *ibid.*

Ready to the hand of these ambitious politicians was Dr. Stephenson, erstwhile surgeon of the Fourteenth Illinois Infantry. Returning from the field to Illinois in June, 1864, he had joined a firm of druggists; and a year later he formed a partnership with two doctors,[9] one of them an active Republican. Although popular, Stephenson was never a purposeful practitioner. He dabbled in local politics and soon became a political errand boy in Springfield.

The doctor kept his political activities secret, hoping that no one would suspect his ulterior motives in forming a veterans' society or realize that Oglesby and Logan were instrumental in its organization. Quite possibly Stephenson did plan in camp a great benevolent veterans' society. When the doctor actually took steps to found the organization, however, he was merely the tool of others. His report in January, 1868, to General Logan indicates his reasons for deception:

> I have about a Dozen calls daily to Know what the G.A.R. is going to do in the coming contest and My invariable reply is "The G.A.R. is not political" *and I have retired from politics myself and Know Nothing.* In this Way I get into the secrets of all and disgorge to none. . . . I will General Keep you posted on the internal Workings of the Capitol for I will be on the inside of Every ring without anyone Suspecting that I take any interest in it. . . . I have been too long a politician to not Know how to keep my secrets.[10]

Stephenson, then, was merely the obstetrician who presided at the delivery of the Grand Army of the Republic from the womb of Illinois politics. Although Governor Oglesby did not parade his parentage, there can be little doubt that the society was his offspring.

The doctor, to be sure, took the preliminary steps. During the winter of 1865–66 he showed his friends notes of a tentative ritual, and in February he administered the oath to his two partners and a journalist. He wrote to Rutledge regarding the proposed society and met him in March at Springfield, where the two men studied the constitutions of various soldiers' organizations.

[9] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 33, 47.
[10] B. F. Stephenson to Logan, January 30, 1868, Logan MSS.

One of Stephenson's associates, Captain John S. Phelps, obtained from the Soldiers' and Sailors' League in St. Louis a copy of their ritual. The founders requested copies of the constitution of a veterans' union at Fitchburg, Massachusetts, and studied also the structure of the Loyal Legion, adopting in part its titles and general plan of organization.[11]

Some of the founders had already had experience with veterans' societies. Robert M. Woods, first adjutant general of the Grand Army, and George R. Steele, adjutant of the first post, had participated in the early meetings of the Army of the Tennessee. The founders may also have received ideas from a wartime Republican society, the Strong Band. While not confined to veterans, this association was similar to the Grand Army in organization and professed purposes. It was based on a system of community, county, and state organization and used military terminology. Probably, too, the founders of the Grand Army were familiar with the Union Clubs, secret Republican societies that used rituals, passwords, and codes to impress their members and whose chief purpose was the dissemination of party propaganda.[12]

It is perhaps significant that the states in which the secret Radical veterans' society developed to its greatest power, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, were the states that had seen the most effective organization of a secret wartime Democratic association, the Knights of the Golden Circle. Estimates of its membership in Indiana ran from seventeen thousand to one hundred thousand.[13] Governors Oglesby and Morton had ample opportunity to observe the political power of this secret society with its oaths, passwords, signs, and grips. Oglesby may have remembered it when he discussed plans for the Grand Army.

The G.A.R.'s first gatherings met in the rooms of Stephenson and his two associates, but they were soon transferred to

[11] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 35; Chicago *Tribune*, September 14, 1887; Worcester *Veteran*, May 1, 1891.

[12] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 13, 18, 22, 34; circular, The Strong Bands, "Organization and Principles," 1863, Elisha W. Keyes MSS. (1808–1910), Library of Wisconsin State Historical Association; Stampp, "Indiana in the Civil War," 363; George S. Merrill, "The Grand Army of the Republic," in *New England Magazine* (Boston, 1884–1917), II (1885), 603.

[13] Rhodes, *History of the United States*, V, 317–19.

the office of Colonel John Snyder, Oglesby's private secretary. Oglesby advised the founders on the ritual. The officers were all close to the governor; one was his private secretary, another was an associate in the adjutant general's office, and a third was a faithful sycophant.[14]

In 1890 the long-lost official records of the Grand Army's early development in Illinois were accidentally found. Stored away with a large number of books, they had been undisturbed for twenty years. The records settled the dispute among the departments as to which state saw the birth of the organization, although, of course, they revealed nothing of its political aspects. These documents showed that Stephenson assumed the position of commander and organized a central department at Springfield. On April 1, 1866, he named his officers in the society's first order and issued a charter for the formation at Decatur of the first post. The founders had assigned the printing of the ritual to the Decatur *Tribune* printers, who were veterans. The ritual impressed these men so much that they asked permission to organize a post. The Springfield group, which was having trouble finding a meeting hall, received its charter a week later. The following month Stephenson officially accepted the constitution and a revised ritual.[15]

Apparently the purpose of this ritual, which contained nothing so crude as political pledges, was to recall wartime hatreds to the initiate's mind. The recruit, blindfolded and draped in a torn army blanket, knelt before a coffin. Directly under his eyes was the name of a victim of the Confederacy's most notorious war prison, Andersonville. Also on the coffin were an open Bible, crossed swords, and an American flag draped in mourning. Here, after much ceremony, the candidate took a solemn oath, upon pain

[14] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 35; Phillips to Trumbull, June 10, 1866, Trumbull MSS. Recently the Grand Army, following the modern trend, has shortened its abbreviated title to GAR. For the sake of consistency with quotations and citations, the author has preferred to use the older official form, G.A.R. It never appeared otherwise during the period of this study.

[15] Chicago *Tribune*, September 14, 1887; Minneapolis *Tribune*, June 4, 1888; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Illinois G.A.R.* (1873 [7th Encampment]—1948), *25th Encampment*, 1891, p. 176 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings [of various] Encampment[s] Illinois G.A.R.; 26th Encampment*, 1892, "General Order No. 1," April 1, 1866, Department of Illinois G.A.R., 170; *ibid.*, "Book of Records."

of punishment as a traitor, never to reveal the Grand Army's secrets. He promised to extend charity to his comrades and their families, assist them to gain employment, and support them for "offices of trust and profit." Finally, he swore to "yield implicit obedience" to his local organization as well as to the national headquarters. The post commander then described in grandiloquent terms the feats of the soldiers, concluding with the statement that if they alone held office, treason would "hide its repulsive head, no more to be seen and felt in this land." [16]

Although the ritual oath facilitated strong control, the constitution established a somewhat decentralized organization. Following the system of political parties, it provided for precinct clubs to be known as posts, for county groups, and for state headquarters to be known as departments. The constitution provided each organization with appropriate officials and superimposed over these units a national headquarters. The county organizations never attained any importance and soon disappeared. Annual encampments, both national and departmental, were obligatory.[17]

The declaration of principles, written by a member of the adjutant general's office, skillfully concealed the society's underlying political motives. It announced that the Grand Army would strive to preserve fraternal feelings, aid needy or disabled comrades, and provide for support and education of soldiers' orphans and maintenance of their widows. The organization would seek public recognition for the services and claims of veterans. Finally it would encourage the maintenance of allegiance to the United States and a respect for its Constitution and laws, "manifested by the discountenancing of whatever may tend to weaken loyalty, incite to insurrection, treason or rebellion." [18]

These principles appealed to Illinois veterans, and they gladly permitted the society's leaders to gather them into the fold. In April, 1866, Stephenson appointed John S. Phelps, Jules C. Webber, and others as organizers. These men, using the post organization fee of ten dollars and membership dues as traveling ex-

[16] *Proceedings of Enlistment and Muster of the Grand Army of the Republic* (pamphlet, Springfield, 1866), 10, Library of Congress.

[17] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 213–20.

[18] "Declaration of Principles," quoted in *Grand Army of the Republic, America's Legion of Honor* (pamphlet, n.p., n.d.), 5.

penses, covered the state. Two new officers, Adjutant General John M. Webber and Quartermaster Jules C. Snyder, both Radical politicians, aided the society's expansion; and Colonel Robert J. Ingersoll, a district commander, also assisted. By August the organizers reported the formation of 56 posts; by October they boasted 157 charters.[19]

While many of the veterans who flocked into the new society saw that it might be used as a pressure group to extract favors from politicians, very few realized the partisan motives of the organizers. The Springfield post, however, made no secret of its views and participated actively in politics. When President Johnson appointed E. S. Merrit, a Democratic editor, as pension agent, it sent indignant resolutions to every Grand Army group within the pension district. So strong did this post become that Radical leaders soon discovered that, like Frankenstein, they had created a monster which must be conciliated. Although they refused the Springfield post's request that Dr. Stephenson be nominated for sheriff, in general they consulted veterans' wishes in choosing candidates. The Chicago *Tribune* noted that Springfield's "Grand Army organization is very strong . . . having drawn to its ranks almost every discharged soldier in the county, and now holds the balance of political power." [20]

In Chicago, where soldiers had been so active during the 1865 campaign, the Chicago *Times* immediately detected and exposed the purpose of the new society. A clever reporter, who slipped past the guards into meetings despite his ignorance of the proper passwords, discovered that the officers' chief purpose was to push through "soldier" nominations of those whom Republicans had already selected.[21]

Senator Trumbull's advocates became increasingly alarmed at the rapid spread of the society throughout the state. Dr. George T. Allen, Stephenson's partner, sent Trumbull the Grand Army constitution and pointed out that members were required to vote

[19] *Proceedings 25th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 177, 179; *26th Encampment*, "Book of Records," General and Special Orders, April, May, June, 170–74, Appendix, 227–37; Springfield *Illinois State Journal*, October 4, 1866.

[20] Chicago *Tribune*, August 27, 30, 1866; New York *Tribune*, August 31, 1866; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, August 31, September 3, 7, 1866; Cole, *Era of the Civil War*, 396.

[21] Chicago *Times*, August 25, 1866.

for soldier-candidates wherever possible. Another supporter reported that Logan planned to run for the Senate and that Oglesby and other G.A.R. men intended "to have all the offices." From Chicago, Trumbull learned that Logan had definitely accepted the Radical program and expected "to gain a triumph by means of the Soldiers organization." [22]

Trumbull was disturbed, and he hastened to announce his friendly feelings for veterans. Fearing classification as an opponent of the G.A.R., he wrote, "I have no idea of putting myself in antagonism to the soldiers. Such a position would be as much at war with my feelings as with sound policy." His henchmen, hoping to cause defections from Logan, went to work among veterans. These workers sought to divert the general from the senatorial race by urging his nomination for the House of Representatives, a movement which eventually succeeded despite Logan's opposition.[23]

This intrigue was only one of Logan's problems; he found his chances further endangered when another general of political prominence equal to his own entered the senatorial race. General John M. Palmer had been interested in organizations of Union soldiers while in command of the Department of Kentucky, and upon his return to Illinois he had co-operated with Stephenson in organizing the Grand Army. His popularity with members steadily increased, and in July a Trumbull supporter reported, "The biggest race will be by the possible combination of the Soldiers upon either Logan or Palmer." [24]

The rivalry between the Logan and Palmer factions within the Grand Army came to a head in July, when the organization's first state convention met at Springfield. Although the constitution prescribed that these gatherings should be composed of one delegate from each district, the meeting was a mass convention. G.A.R. leaders, hoping to attract nonmembers into the society, invited all veterans interested in aiding the disabled and unfortu-

[22] Dr. G. T. Allen to Trumbull, May 13, 1866, Trumbull MSS.; Phillips to *id.*, June 10, 1866, *ibid.;* C. M. Hawley to *id.*, July 1, 1866, *ibid.*

[23] Trumbull to Phillips, June 17, 1866, *ibid.;* Logan to D. C. Barber and others, undated, in Chicago *Tribune*, May 22, 1866.

[24] Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, April 10, 1866; John McCauley Palmer, *Personal Recollections of John M. Palmer, the Story of an Earnest Life* (Cincinnati, 1901), 278–80; C. M. Hawley to Trumbull, July 1, 1866, Trumbull MSS.

nate, and in establishing the "rights of the volunteer soldiery. . . . morally, socially, and politically." General Palmer's name headed the fifty-four signatures to the call, which included also those of Logan, Stephenson, and William J. Rutledge.[25] Newspapers gave the proposed meeting wide publicity.

The convention, held July 12, demanded bounty equalization from Congress and a soldiers' orphans' home from the state legislature. It passed extremely Radical resolutions which announced that rebellion was a crime of the "most malignant nature" and declared that the government should demand guarantees against the "rash admission to place and power" of all former Confederates. Soldiers, the resolutions continued, had a right to demand that the executive and Congress hold the country's safety paramount to all other considerations.[26]

Newspapers could give no information regarding the struggle for leadership within the convention, since the sessions were secret and reporters were barred from the hall. It soon appeared, however, that Logan's advocates were in a minority, for the convention elected Palmer as state commander. Oglesby immediately wrote to Palmer, on duty in North Carolina, informing him of the honor.[27]

Trumbull's supporters regarded the outcome as favorable to the senator's prospects for re-election. One man reported that although the convention had been called in Logan's interests, a majority had opposed him because of his recent speeches, which seemed to be looking to the President "for patronage." Even more significant to Trumbull's workers was the absence in the convention, perhaps because bounty legislation was anticipated, of any display of hostility to the incumbent senators. One member of the assembly assured Trumbull that if the soldiers' general spirit was an indication, the Grand Army would not seriously oppose him in the coming senatorial battle. The Cook County delegation, in fact, had definitely favored him.[28]

Palmer's election seemed to render futile Logan's hope of be-

[25] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 28, 29, 1866.
[26] *Ibid.*, July 13, 1866.
[27] Palmer, *Personal Recollections*, 278–80.
[28] N. B. Judd to Trumbull, July 11, 1866, Trumbull MSS.; John Cook to *id.*, July 19, 1866, *ibid.*; A. Chester to *id.*, September 21, 1866, *ibid.*

coming senator through the G.A.R.'s influence; it indicated that Radical politicians had settled upon Palmer as better bait for the soldier vote. Palmer was "now in the minds of the scheming ones." One observer wrote, ". . . the recent election of Palmer as the Grand Commander over the heads of Oglesby and Logan, shows that with the soldiers he is far from being the first choice." The scheme to nominate Logan for the House in order to eliminate him from the senatorial race succeeded when in August the Republican state convention selected him for congressman at large. Trumbull's henchmen exultantly regarded this nomination as "unmistakeably shelving Logan as to the Senate." Logan refused to be discouraged. Although he participated energetically in the campaign against his Democratic opponent, he still looked forward hopefully to November, when the state legislature would vote for senators.[29]

While Illinois Democrats grew uneasy at the steady growth of the "dark lantern secret organization," Radical governors of other midwestern states began to think that perhaps Oglesby had hit upon a brilliant campaign idea. Governor Oliver P. Morton, of Indiana, was the first to follow his neighbor's example. Until November, 1865, when he went to Europe, Morton had zealously urged acceptance of President Johnson's views on Reconstruction. So loyal was his support, indeed, that Johnson had assigned him a secret mission to Louis Napoleon. Upon his return in March, 1866, however, the governor's keen political insight prompted him to join the Radicals. Journeying to Washington, Morton urged the President to sign the Civil Rights bill. When Johnson refused, the governor declared that they would never again meet in political fellowship.

Morton arrived in Indiana early in April to find Republicans apathetic and demoralized. The mass of the party by this time favored the policy of congressional Radicals; but because of the slender Republican majority in Indiana, it could not safely spare the Johnson supporters. In February the Republican convention, attempting to please both factions, had adopted an inconsistent platform.

[29] Judd to *id.*, July 11, 1866, *ibid.;* George T. Brown to *id.*, August 16, 1866, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune*, August 9, 1866.

Since Morton expected the state legislature to choose him as senator, he could not afford to let the hopeful and aggressive Democrats gain control of that body. Taking immediate action to arouse Republicans from their apathy and to win over the Johnson faction, he published a strong indictment of the Democratic party.[30]

His next step was an attempt to gain a united soldier vote. Major Oliver M. Wilson, secretary of an officers' veterans' association, discussed with him the possibility of organizing a strong partisan soldiers' society.[31] Having heard of the Grand Army's activities in Illinois, the governor sent Major General R. S. Foster to Springfield to discover whether the organization could be made effective in Indiana.

Stephenson had already sent a close friend, Colonel A. J. Hawhe, to establish posts in Indiana. But Hawhe had attempted to organize a post in a Democratic section of the state, and strong opposition had forced him to abandon the project. When Foster visited Stephenson, the latter made no mention of Hawhe's failure. He initiated Foster and expressed his eagerness to introduce the G.A.R. in Indiana.[32]

Foster hurried back to Indianapolis and administered the oath to Major Wilson and other supporters of Governor Morton. Elected department commander by these men, Foster immediately appointed twenty men to form posts in different parts of the state. In order that the veterans might participate as a society in a great political rally to be held in August, he organized the first post at Indianapolis without waiting for the arrival from Springfield of rituals and charters. One observer estimated that about one thousand members of the post participated in the rally and welcomed the guests of honor, Governor Oglesby and Colonel Robert J. Ingersoll.

Soon afterward Foster sent Oliver M. Wilson to confer with Stephenson and his aides about producing a badge and printing supplies. According to Wilson, the self-appointed commander

[30] Foulke, *Life of Morton*, I, 455–58; Indianapolis *Journal*, October 18, 23, December 14, 1865, March 10, June 28, 1866.

[31] Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, June 28, 1866; Madison (Ind.) *Daily Courier*, June 28, 1866; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 11; Indianapolis *Journal*, December 21, 1865.

[32] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 41.

expressed satisfaction that the society was succeeding in Indiana: ". . . as we were in a big fight in Indiana—meaning our campaign —we could get the boys to take hold of it because we had a Morton in the fight." Privately, Wilson heartily concurred with Stephenson's view; observation convinced him that Morton was supplying more efficient behind-the-scenes direction than were the Illinois leaders. He later commented: ". . . it was for a mightier brain . . . a political giant—Oliver P. Morton—to see the possibilities which would arise from the organization outlined by Major Stephenson for making it a power in the land. . . . A political campaign in Indiana meant the marshaling of every soldier in the party that supported him as governor during the war. Her soldiers were his friends. He had been their friend. He saw it possible to keep them united. . . . his first wish was to preserve unsullied the record of Indiana's soldiers from the taint of affiliation with the political party that had opposed the war."

Undoubtedly General Foster's enthusiastic leadership also contributed to the society's rapid expansion in Indiana. He obtained use of the state senate chamber for initiation ceremonies, and so numerous were membership applications that frequently veterans made their pledges before choosing the posts they wished to attend. Under Foster's direction Wilson and two others designed the Grand Army's first badge and arranged for its manufacture at Lafayette. Soon Stephenson was writing to the Indiana Department for rituals, constitutions, blank charters, and other supplies.[33]

Equally rapid was the Grand Army's expansion through other northwestern states. In May, 1866, Stephenson, assuming authority as national commander, had authorized Captain H. W. Howe to organize posts throughout Ohio and in Detroit, Michigan. Under Howe's direction two organizers toured Ohio and formed several posts each week.[34]

Governors in other western states, perceiving the society's potential power, took steps to encourage its development. The Indiana Department received letters from various parts of the country

[33] *Ibid.*, 16, 18, 23, 25, 26, 35.

[34] *Proceedings 26th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, "Book of Records," 234, 255; T. D. McGillicuddy (comp.), *Proceedings Annual and Semi-Annual Encampments, Department of Ohio, for the First Fourteen Years of Its Existence* (Columbus, 1912), 4 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*).

inquiring about the organization. In Wisconsin the Grand Army constitution was adopted by an already thriving veterans' society, the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League. A branch of the national Radical veterans' organization and a group officered by leading Radicals, this association had both political and charitable motives. In May, General James K. Proudfit, president of the society and Republican member of the state legislature, invited delegates from the state's fourteen branches to form a stronger organization. He also invited soldiers from districts where no association existed.[35]

Later the same month Grand Army headquarters at Springfield authorized George F. Rowell, political errand boy for Governor Fairchild, to organize posts in Wisconsin.[36] His first step was to initiate Fairchild, Proudfit, Jeremiah Rusk, and other leading Radicals. When the veterans' convention assembled at Madison in June, it adopted Proudfit's suggestion for reorganization of the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League into a G.A.R. department. The delegates established headquarters at Madison, ordered all branches of the League to adopt the Grand Army's constitution, and invited other veterans' societies to join. The delegates elected Proudfit department commander and General T. S. Allen, Wisconsin's secretary of State, to the administrative council. One of the vice-presidents was Cassius Fairchild, the governor's brother.

With but one exception, all the members of this convention were ardent Radicals. In addition to the usual veterans' requests for offices and bounties, the delegates adopted resolutions demanding that extreme measures be taken against the defeated South. They proposed that leading Confederates be punished and excluded from all participation in the government.[37]

Similar circumstances attended the founding of the Grand Army in Minnesota. In July, Governor W. R. Marshall called a meeting of sixteen veterans in his office, where the G.A.R. quartermaster general initiated them. By October these men had established fifteen posts. Stephenson sent his adjutant general to St.

[35] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, February 26, May 26, 1866; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 26.

[36] *Proceedings 26th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, "Book of Records," 174, 237.

[37] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, June 7, 8, 21, 1866.

Louis, where he organized a department and appointed as provisional commander Governor Thomas C. Fletcher. The governor had seen the workings of the G.A.R. in Illinois when he visited that state in July.[38]

Radicals organized posts also in other western states. In May, Stephenson sent representatives to establish the society in Michigan and Iowa. Two months later a Davenport, Iowa, soldiers' association reorganized as a Grand Army post and formed a provisional state department. In September, Iowa could boast forty-five posts. By October departments had been formed in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, Iowa, and Michigan; and posts in Ohio, Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, the District of Columbia, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. Stephenson even sent a representative to Tennessee with instructions to give the society a foothold among Union veterans in the south.[39]

While the Radical western governors were encouraging the G.A.R.'s development because they believed it would prove a powerful ally in the coming congressional campaign, they usually concealed its political purpose from prospective members. For example, a circular sent from headquarters to prominent Illinois soldiers informed them that the Grand Army was "exclusively *Their* own, for the protection of them and their interests—to aid with its charity the maimed and helpless soldier, and the dependent families of the fallen, to secure employment for those returned soldiers who have vainly sought it for themselves . . . and finally, to assert, as quietly as the dropping of a ballot but powerful as a rushing army with banners, the rights of soldiers to places of trust and emolument. . . ." [40]

Undoubtedly this promise to work for veterans' "rights" was

[38] *Proceedings of Annual Meetings of the National Encampments, Grand Army of the Republic* (published annually at various places, 1877–, and sometimes entitled *Journal of Annual Meetings . . .*), *Proceedings of 27th National Encampment*, 1893, "Book of Records," 269 (hereinafter cited as *Journal* or *Proceedings* [of various] *National Encampments, G.A.R.*); *Proceedings 26th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, "Book of Records," 174.

[39] *Proceedings 26th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 235, 236, 237; Jacob Anderson Swisher, *The Iowa Department of the Grand Army of the Republic* (Iowa City, 1936), 27; *Journal 9th Annual Session (Including First to Eighth) Department of Iowa, G.A.R.* (Des Moines, 1883), 9; Washington *Great Republic*, February 7, 1867.

[40] Circular (in handwriting of Jules C. Webber), 1866, MSS. collections of Pennsylvania Historical Society, Philadelphia.

an important factor in the society's rapid expansion. And perhaps there was another reason, sensed rather than understood, why servicemen flocked in such large numbers to the Grand Army. Having recently lost their sense of solidarity through demobilization, many may have been further disillusioned upon returning to their communities to find themselves aliens in the civilian world. Universally veterans have eagerly fraternized with their fellows in their longing to recapture a lost sense of fellowship; reliving their common experiences, they have momentarily forgotten their more recent disappointments. In the transitional period of readjustment, therefore, organizations have perhaps performed a useful function in helping volunteers re-establish satisfactory adjustments to social life.[41]

One Grand Army leader, however, later implied that the desire to become an effective pressure group was a more powerful incentive to affiliation with the young society than "all questions of sentiment or association. . . . Empty sleeves, single legs, eyeless sockets, and emaciated bodies were too often coupled with personal necessities, and the maimed and diseased in need of charity or employment began to point out the . . . growing demand for organized work. . . ." [42]

The success of the Radicals in organizing western soldiers impelled their opponents to consider methods by which they might rally the soldiers to the President's support. In August several officers met in Philadelphia to plan a national veterans' convention. Several urged that Confederate soldiers be invited; the majority, however, realized that sectional prejudice was still too strong for such a step. The officers at first planned to hold the convention at Chicago in the hope of thwarting Logan's political aspirations, but later they settled upon Cleveland, Ohio.[43]

The convention assembled on September 17, with the venerable General John E. Wool as temporary president, General Gordon

[41] Willard Waller, *The Veteran Comes Back* (New York, 1944), 177–79, 180, 182, 188, 193–94; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 16, 130–31.

[42] George S. Merrill, "The Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts," in *New England Magazine*, IV (1886), 113; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 208–16.

[43] New York *Tribune*, August 20, 1866; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, August 22, 1866; New York *Tribune*, August 22, 1866; Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, August 22, 28, 1866.

Granger as permanent chairman, and General George Custer as the most dashing and prominent member. The shrewd and masterful Senator James R. Doolittle of Wisconsin came to "show the unsophisticated how to manage a convention." Ignoring the Negro-suffrage question, the gathering adopted resolutions and issued an address endorsing Johnson's policy. An Indiana delegate, with the G.A.R. in mind, offered a resolution warning soldiers against secret organizations. It failed of adoption; the Grand Army had not yet spread to the East, and delegates from that section did not perceive its menace to the President's cause. The convention's expression of thanks for messages from Nathan B. Forrest and other Confederate officers gave Radicals an opportunity to shout that the delegates were forgetting their loyalty.[44]

The Democratic press, making the most of the assembly, found something "sublime" in this meeting of "war-worn veterans" in the interests of peace. The New York *World*, declaring the soldier vote sufficient to "turn the scale" in every state, proclaimed the convention a "glorious contrast" to the "base machinations" of the Radicals.[45]

Not to be outdone, the Radical Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League executed what the New York *Tribune* termed a flank movement. Immediately after the call for the Democratic soldier convention appeared, the League's Washington branch suggested that a committee be appointed to issue a call for a veterans' convention under Radical auspices.[46]

The G.A.R., by this time strong in the western states, took immediate steps to encourage the movement. The organization's national leaders signed the call and arranged for a gathering of servicemen at Bloomington, Illinois, which elected delegates to the proposed convention. Among these were Governor Oglesby, Logan, Ingersoll, and other prominent Grand Army members. The Springfield posts selected Stephenson as one of their delegates. Indiana's Commander Foster requested Grand Army district leaders to urge attendance. Response was enthusiastic; representatives

[44] New York *Tribune*, August 18, 19, 25, 26, 1866; Philadelphia *North American and United States Gazette*, September 18, 1866; Cincinnati *Commercial*, September 19, 1866; Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, September 19, 1866.

[45] New York *World*, August 27, 1866.

[46] New York *Tribune*, August 21, 1866.

from 138 Indiana posts went to the convention. In September Wisconsin's Commander Proudfit issued a circular urging soldiers to "provide for being properly represented at this grand convocation. . . ." Thirty-four Wisconsin delegates, headed by Proudfit and Allen, attended.[47]

When the assembly convened on September 24 at Pittsburgh, the Grand Army had its representatives there "in force." Eastern delegates represented two Radical veterans' societies, the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League and the Boys in Blue, as well as county and state conventions.[48]

Logan arrived too late to take his scheduled place as president. Ohio's General Cox was permanent chairman, and General J. F. Hartranft, Pennsylvania's auditor general, was a prominent figure. But it was the belligerent General Butler who directed the convention. After Cox and others had endorsed the Fourteenth Amendment and assured the delegates that they must influence others to support Radical policy, Butler, robust and pompous, his bald head gleaming, read the unrestrained condemnation of Johnson in the resolutions he had drafted.[49]

Adopting Butler's suggestion, the convention appointed Henry A. Barnum to co-operate with General Allen of the Grand Army and with representatives of the United States Service Club, the Boys in Blue clubs of Maryland and Michigan, and the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League of Washington in consolidating all Radical veterans' societies for campaign purposes. This action was to result in the formation of a national organization of Boys in Blue for the presidential campaign of 1868.[50]

Several convention leaders had planned to push through the assembly resolutions expressing preference for General Grant as next Republican presidential candidate. General Franz Sigel, however, favored Butler's candidacy and threatened to denounce

[47] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, September 7, 1866; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 27; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 4, 1866.

[48] *Address of Major A. S. Cushman, Grand Commander, Department of Massachusetts G.A.R., delivered at the annual meeting of the Department in Boston, January 8, 1868* (pamphlet, Boston, 1868), Library of Congress; *Early History Department of Massachusetts, from 1866–1880, inclusive* (Boston, 1895), compiled by direction of Department Encampment of 1892, p. 5.

[49] New York *Tribune*, September 26, 1866.

[50] *Ibid.*; Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 26.

Grant formally as unfit for the presidency. As a result the convention took no action regarding nominations. Grant received an invitation, but he replied that it was against his "convictions of duty" to participate "in the political dissensions of the day." [51]

The Radical Republican press capitalized on the veterans' uproarious enthusiasm, which had been expressed in hearty handshaking, wild cheering, and raucous singing. The New York *Tribune* described the gathering as the largest and most enthusiastic ever held in the country. Other papers compared it with the Cleveland convention, which they asserted had attracted but few veterans and had been rambling in purpose and uncertain in performance. Radicals everywhere pointed to the convention's success as proof that soldiers favored their cause. James G. Blaine stated later that this assembly did more to popularize the Fourteenth Amendment than "any other instrumentality of the year." He wrote, "Of the four conventions held, this . . . was far the most influential upon public opinion. . . . [the delegates'] influence consolidated almost *en masse* the soldier vote of the country in support of the Republican party. . . ." [52]

Perhaps the most significant result of the Pittsburgh convention was the spread of the Grand Army into the East. Illinois Grand Army delegates came prepared to win converts, while Indiana's Adjutant General Wilson, armed with charters, rituals, and constitutions, met delegates by appointment and gave them the supplies necessary to organize departments. He declared, "It was . . . no secret that we claimed to represent the G.A.R., and from the fact that Indiana headquarters was sought by so many representative soldiers from other states, who asked to receive the 'work,' we assumed that our badge had drawn many." [53]

Massachusetts delegates felt the need for stronger organization than the one they represented and were especially enthusiastic about the Grand Army. Initiated in a body, they hastened home to establish the society. General Charles Devens became provisional

[51] J. J. Stewart to Butler, September 9, 1866, Butler MSS.; New York *Army and Navy Journal*, September 8, 15, 22, 29, October 13, 1866; Adam Badeau to Edwin M. Dudley, September 18, 1866, in Chicago *Tribune*, September 19, 1872.

[52] New York *Tribune*, September 25, 26, 1866; Cincinnati *Commercial*, September 25, 1866; Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, II, 232.

[53] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 34.

commander, but Major A. S. Cushman, who had been active in the Boys in Blue, was the most energetic in establishing posts. As a result of his efforts, many branches of the Radical Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League eagerly voted themselves into the G.A.R.[54]

Pennsylvania Boys in Blue societies had already become interested in the western society, and they instructed their convention delegates to arrange for the chartering of posts in their state. The general council of Boys in Blue in Philadelphia, however, was too impatient to await their return and applied to the Wisconsin Department for a post charter. Under the leadership of these Philadelphia Radicals, the Grand Army spread rapidly through Pennsylvania.[55] Thus Radical veterans' clubs of the East became the nuclei for Grand Army posts.

As Radicals gained control of the Republican party organization, the Johnson followers gradually became identified with the Democratic party. When Radicals decided that they had attracted enough adherents to stand alone, they refused to recognize any distinction between Democrats and conservative Republicans. They denounced as traitors to the Union all who rejected the Radical program.

To compensate for the loss of those disgruntled conservative Republicans who would vote the Democratic ticket, the Radicals regarded a solid soldier vote as more important than ever. Moreover, if they could show that the Union's saviors were enthusiastically supporting the Radical cause, many a wavering conservative might be won over. Radical politicians accordingly did their utmost to encourage the participation of veterans' clubs in the congressional campaign of 1866.

This active co-operation of servicemen gave a military aspect to the campaign. One periodical, declaring that the military spirit bequeathed by the war was most manifest in the pre-election political activities, commented, "There never was such organization of forces; such enrollment of voters, such marches and counter-

[54] *Address of Major A. S. Cushman*, 8; Worcester *Veteran*, May, 1891; Merrill, "Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts," *loc. cit.*, 114; *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 5.

[55] *Proceedings Encampments Department of Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872, inclusive* (Pottsville, 1872), vi, vii.

marches, before the battle at the polls." [56] Radicals deliberately shaped the struggle along the lines of a military campaign. It was, they repeatedly declared, a continuation of the battle for which the soldiers had gone to war. Although they were casting ballots rather than bullets, their power was as necessary to combat the forces of treason in the political arena as it had been on the field.

The conflict had, in fact, merely been transferred from the military to the political field, with Radicals battling to gain complete political supremacy over the South for themselves, and economic supremacy for the industrialists whom they represented. They were marshaling the forces triumphant in the military struggle in order to complete the economic and political victory of the North. Parading, holding mass meetings, and issuing resolutions, soldiers were to be an important factor in the battle.

In the West the Grand Army posts, shouting the praises of the Radicals, functioned as veterans' campaign clubs. In September the adjutant general of Indiana invited General Butler to a demonstration and torchlight procession of the G.A.R. In Illinois politico-veterans, among them Robert J. Ingersoll, encouraged the society's rapid expansion. Throughout the state, posts officially denounced Johnson's policy and staged rallies to aid Logan in his campaign for the post of congressman at large. In September the department held, in connection with a Radical demonstration, an encampment at which "General Logan was the hero of the day." Later the Springfield post visited Decatur to join other posts from the county in a "grand 'soldiers' welcome' " to Logan on the occasion of a campaign debate. "Members should wear their badges," reminded the Springfield *Illinois State Journal*. Logan effectively combined the mercenary and the emotional appeals: in one breath he admonished the soldiers to rally again in defense of the flag; in the next he promised them generous treatment from his party. Although Wisconsin Grand Army men grumbled over the small number of veterans on the Radical ticket, they nevertheless supported the cause. Officers Proudfit and Allen actively encouraged the society's participation in campaign rallies.[57]

[56] New York *Army and Navy Journal*, October 20, 1866.

[57] Edward P. Howe to Butler, September 18, 1866, Butler MSS.; *Proceedings 26th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, "Special Orders No. 3," July 21, 1866, p. 237; New York *Tribune*, September 28, 1866; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*,

In the eastern states, where the G.A.R. was not yet sufficiently strong to manage veterans' campaign activities, Radicals won soldier support chiefly through other organizations. The Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League was active in many cities, particularly in Washington and New York. In some states Boys in Blue clubs, similar to the Republican Veteran Union Clubs of 1864, were equally energetic. Politicians engineered state mass conventions in order that the soldiers might cheer for the Radical Reconstruction policy. In several states, groups of Radical officers issued addresses to soldiers urging the necessity for preventing the "Rebels . . . being constituted by immediate restoration to political power our superiors at the ballot box." The Republican National Committee "heartily approved" a plan for organizing "Singing Boys in Blue" clubs. Composed of disabled veterans, these societies were to perform at political gatherings.[58]

Leaders of the Loyal Veterans in New York attempted to unite all Radical veterans' societies into one great national organization. Like the G.A.R., this association would protect soldiers' interests at the same time that it shouted for Radical policies.[59] Although the society scarcely outlived the election, it served its purpose during the campaign.

Under Radical tutelage, many veterans came to believe that it was as important to preserve the government from Democratic control as it had been to defeat the Confederacy. One veteran wrote: ". . . the rebellion is not crushed. . . . our late army will vindicate the rights of the American people at the polls as nobly as they did in the field." Veterans of Lake County, Illinois, expressed a happy combination of political convictions with confident expectation of pleasant things to come. They announced that those who had crushed the rebellion and were "resolved to repeat the chastisement of the same spirit of evil, now clothed

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July 6, 11, September 26, October 6, 12, 16, 28, 29, 1866; Chicago *Tribune*, September 25, 27, October 19, 1866; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 26, 1866; F. H. Robinson to Washburne, December 12, 1866, Washburne MSS.

[58] New York *Tribune*, August 31, 1866; Short to Butler, September 6, 1866, Butler MSS.; Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, September 15, 1866; Harriette M. Dilla, *Politics of Michigan, 1865–1878*, in Columbia University *Studies in History, Economics and Public Law* (New York, 1912), XLVII, 65; New York *Tribune*, August 30, September 19, 1866; New York *Soldier's Friend*, August, 1866.

[59] New York *Tribune*, September 16, October 24, 1866.

with the treacherous garb of 'my policy' at the ballot-box" were entitled "to the dispensation of the fruits of their victory and a controlling voice in shaping the destiny of this great Republic." The *Soldier's Friend* encouraged this view by publishing fiery editorials throughout the campaign. The Radical press boasted that almost all veterans had rallied to the Radical standard. The *Soldier's Friend* commented, "The 'Boys in Blue' rally in every state and county, in almost every township of the loyal States, and their voices are heard mingling now in the contest for moral and political triumph, as they mingled in the cries of the battle-field." [60]

A few citizens were alarmed at the veterans' enthusiastic participation in politics. The prominent writer Charles Eliot Norton pointed out the danger that, encouraged by politicians, they would arrogate to themselves a special distinction for their services. Too much was said, he feared, about offices for soldiers, soldiers' candidates, and soldiers' parties. "Nothing can be more corrupting in politics than the existence of a class of men willing to sell themselves for office and with notoriety sufficient to make them available as candidates." But in the tumult of the campaign, such warnings went unheeded. For many veterans the campaign was a good show, and they entered into its spirit with zeal. Undoubtedly, too, they were enticed into active participation by vague Republican promises—as, for example, General Garfield's championship of a more-generous bounty-equalization law.[61]

Democrats appeared to be overwhelmed by the determined Radical efforts to gain a united soldier vote. Their rallies, parades, and state veterans' conventions seemed timid imitations of Radical demonstrations. Placed on the defensive by the success of their opponents, Democratic journals resorted to sarcasm. As soon as Congress adjourned, Johnson began replacing Radical pension agents with administration supporters, and this step rendered it even more difficult for the Democrats to influence soldiers. Unfortunately for the President, his move came too late; the previous incumbents had already propagandized the servicemen. Johnson's

[60] Chicago *Tribune*, September 27, 1866; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July, August, October, 1866; Atchison (Kan.) *Daily Free Press*, July 24, 1866.

[61] New York *Soldier's Friend*, September, 1866; Burke A. Hinsdale (ed.), *Works of James Abram Garfield* (Boston, 1882–83), 2 vols., I, 225.

step only served to alienate them further. Moreover, they resented the appointment of men who in some cases had been active opponents of the war. Radicals saw their opportunity and cried that Johnson was insulting veterans by giving them Copperheads as pension agents.[62]

Perhaps to nullify the credit that Radicals claimed for having pushed bounty equalization through Congress, the administration delayed the payments due soldiers under the new law. Radicals, who depended on these payments to strengthen their hold on the veterans, feared that the President might checkmate them by postponing payment until after the election. The New York *Tribune* accused Democrats of seeking to convince volunteers that Congress had been trifling with them. The Democratic press indignantly termed the charge an "unqualified falsehood," but Radicals continued to circulate the accusation.[63]

Finally the administration found it necessary to issue a denial. The assistant adjutant general explained that the board must consider many acts before making regulations for carrying out the law. Radicals were unimpressed. "The fact still remains that the bounties are not paid," declared one paper, while another announced, "It is hardly to be supposed that payment would be delayed if Andrew Johnson wanted them paid." When Democrats launched a counterattack to the effect that Negro veterans would receive three hundred dollars additional bounty and white soldiers only a hundred, Thaddeus Stevens met the onslaught with a letter for publication. Briefly denying the charge, he brushed it aside with the remark that it was "too low for comment."

The participation of the Grand Army and other soldiers' organizations in the campaign encouraged wild rumors of violence as the election approached. Each party accused the other of planning to seize the government by force with the soldiers' aid, and excitable individuals on both sides actually proposed such action. Johnson received offers of military aid from a few veterans who

[62] St. Louis *Dispatch*, July 31, September 6, 1866; Indianapolis *Herald*, July 3, 1866; Chicago *Tribune*, August 30, 1866; New York *Tribune*, August 31, 1866.

[63] Philadelphia *Public Ledger and Daily Transcript*, August 4, 1866; New York *Tribune*, August 21, 27, 1866; Madison (Ind.) *Daily Courier*, August 25, 1866; Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, September 27, 1866; St. Louis *Dispatch*, September 5, 1866.

despised the Radical cause. Radicals spoke even more seriously of war; the belligerent Butler openly threatened that his party would use veterans to force its will on the President. Threats of force that cropped out vaguely in Radical speeches became more definite in private correspondence. A Wisconsin citizen, imbued with the general spirit of excitement, wrote, "Should Northern Governors not call a convention, at least of themselves, and adopt measures to preserve their own states from a second Civil War, and to protect and defend the Constitution and Union, if again assailed? Arm, arm, arm, say we. . . ." Governor Fairchild reported to Senator T. O. Howe that "fears of another civil war" were current, as well as "an undefined fear of general danger. I confess to some little feeling of this kind and to a strong wish to prepare, so far as I am able as the governor of this state, to meet all enemies on their own terms." [64]

Even more alarming were reports regarding military organizations in Missouri, Tennessee, and other states. The most serious threats of violence, however, came from Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, where G.A.R. leaders apparently were calmly planning military action against the President. Charles O'Beirne, commissioned by Johnson to investigate these rumors, found evidence of the most startling nature and sent excited reports to the President. Journeying through Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, he forced open Grand Army lodges at night, interviewed army officers who had observed the society's activities, and tried to trace to their source shipments of arms which were being distributed to G.A.R. members.

O'Beirne found a man who claimed to have been present at a meeting in St. Louis where a group of western Radical governors discussed with General Logan the possibility of appointing a dictator. From General James B. Steedman and other officers,

[64] New York *Tribune*, September 21, October 1, 1866; St. Louis *Dispatch*, October 5, 1866; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, October 5, 1866; Madison *Daily Courier*, October 6, 1866; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 11, 1866; Thaddeus Stevens to E. Billingfeet, October 2, 1866, in New York *Tribune*, October 4, 1866; Duffield to Johnson, September 27, 1866, Johnson MSS.; Lew G. Faxon to Johnson, October 12, 1866, *ibid.;* Claude Bowers, *The Tragic Era* (Cambridge, 1929), 143; S. Magoon to Fairchild, September 9, 1866, Fairchild MSS.; Fairchild to Senator T. O. Howe, July 24, 1866, Fairchild Letter Books.

O'Beirne learned that Radical politicians planned to have Congress impeach Johnson immediately after it convened. The Grand Army, having completely armed and equipped in the meantime, would then march upon Washington, in readiness to support Congress should the President seek to prevent it from deposing him. While G.A.R. leaders were distributing arms among posts in the West, members were unaware of the purpose for which the society was to be used. O'Beirne informed Johnson, "The G.A.R. are drilled to the sound of the bugle and summoned by the call. This I saw myself." He reported:

> The whole reveals the fact that there is a large body of men in Indiana and Illinois thoroughly organized, partly armed, and drilled to the use of arms. They are sworn to be secret [*sic*] to obey their commanders. Their intentions are nominally at the start charitable. Beyond this only a small portion of them know what they are politically intended for, and what their leaders propose to do. It is patent that this large organization with kindred branches in some others of the States, will co-operate with and act under the directions of Govr Morton and some four or five other of the Governors of the West. . . .[65]

The investigator concluded:

> I think from a full survey of the field that the Radicals mean violence finally and nothing will avert it but a positive determined and fearless attitude of the President backed up by preparations and reliable armed force to execute his constant prerogatives. . . . I regard this as a fit country for military occupation— We had to do it to keep down the Copperheads, and in my mind we ought to do it to keep down the Radicals. . . . Indiana needs reconstruction. . . .[66]

O'Beirne emphasized Steedman's belief that the arms at Springfield should be removed and that "the President should have at least 50,000 stand of arms at Washington."

Evidence exists to substantiate O'Beirne's reports that Radical

[65] Reports of Charles O'Beirne, undated (fall, 1866), filed with October 12, 1866, correspondence, Johnson MSS.

[66] Reports headed Logansport, Ind., filed October 9, 1866, Johnson MSS.; Indianapolis, filed October 12, 17, 1866, *ibid.* (these reports are scattered through the Johnson MSS., Vols. XCII–CIV).

governors were arming veterans in preparation for an armed attack on the President. Johnson received from General George W. McCook an account of warlike preparations of the Grand Army in Ohio. From Indiana came the report: "Our Governor or some one else has been distributing guns to the 'Army of the Republic' a serete [*sic*] political organization." General Sol Meredith of Indiana informed Secretary of the Interior Orville H. Browning that Governors Fletcher and Oglesby, as well as other Radicals, planned to seize the government and depose the President if they won the election. Grant, Sherman, and Morton were discussed as possible dictators to be elevated in Johnson's place. Wilson wrote regarding Governor Morton's attitude: "If internecine strife was to follow, he proposed without any dalliance to crush it with the same spirit, and the same men who had crushed the rebellion." Governor Fairchild wrote to Senator Howe:

> We . . . will not be induced to swerve from the right path. . . . I feel that we ought to have more arms in our possession, but the state has drawn all its quota. Can we get more? It will certainly do no harm to have them on hand. . . .
>
> If you deem it best will you ask the Secretary of War if he will fill a requisition for 5 or 10 thousand rifles and a batty [*sic*]—I do not wish to make the request officially until I am sure that it will be granted. . . .
>
> I have been very careful as yet not to show publicly that I have even a shadow of fear for the future.[67]

An Illinois Grand Army leader frankly admitted that Radical politicians would, if necessary, use the society as an armed force to compel Democratic submission to their policies. He wrote to Senator Trumbull: ". . . nominally we are at peace but does it ever occur to you that we may again be driven to arms? The persistent and unyielding course of the Administration in a policy of reconstruction so foreign to the absolute demands of the country . . . will in the absence of the proper checks imposed by a loyal

[67] H. W. Harrington to Johnson, September 25, 1866, *ibid.*; "Diary of Orville H. Browning," in *Collections of the Illinois State Historical Society* (Springfield, 1927), 2 vols., II, 94; Fairchild to Senator Howe, July 24, 1866, Fairchild Letter Books; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 67.

and fearless Congress lead to a rupture that will sink into insignificance the impoverishing war that has just ended. Can you then think in our retaining our Military organization with love to our country and hate to treason any bad results will ensue?" [68]

Newspaper reports supported O'Beirne's statements about mysterious shipments of arms, while later events were to confirm his belief that G.A.R. leaders planned to use the organization for military action.[69]

Alarmed, Johnson took precautions to avoid an uprising. In response to his query, Grant told him that 2,224 troops were within easy reach of the national capital, but that only 1,550 of these were effective. Johnson wrote to Secretary of War Stanton on November 1 that this force was inadequate "in view of the prevalence, in various portions of the country, of a revolutionary and turbulent disposition, which might at any moment assume insurrectionary proportions and lead to serious disorders." He requested Stanton to take immediate steps to ensure the government's safety "and thus discourage any attempt for its possession by insurgent or other illegal combinations." Johnson received various suggestions from anxious Democrats; one urged that the excitement aroused by veterans be directed against England, while another suggested a war with Mexico.[70]

The shrewd and aggressive efforts of Radicals to gain the soldiers' vote were highly successful; their propaganda had much the same effect on veterans as on other classes. In 1865 Radicals had faced a public opinion that was, in general, hostile to their Reconstruction program. War prosperity was still high; merchants, manufacturers, financiers, and speculators were concentrating wealth in their own hands. Looking upon the South as a field to invest their waiting capital, these interests desired its early restoration.[71] Those in the lower economic ranks disliked the Radical

[68] John Cook to Trumbull, July 19, 1866, Trumbull MSS.; St. Louis *Dispatch*, October 11, 1866.

[69] See Chapter V.

[70] Johnson to Stanton, November 1, 1866 (copy) Johnson MSS.; J. H. Black to Johnson, October 12, 1866, *ibid.*; Hiram Ketchum to *id.*, October 13, 1866, *ibid.*

[71] Dubois, *Black Reconstruction*, 253; William A. Dunning, "The Second Rebirth of the Republican Party," in *American Historical Review*, XVI (1910), 60–61.

plan for Negro suffrage, while the returning soldiers were vehement in their opposition.

But within little more than a year, the ineptitude of Johnson's political methods, the South's "black codes" and tactless election of Confederate leaders, and the adroitness of Radical propaganda produced a change. The President's emphasis upon state rights, as well as his failure to stress economic issues, cost him the support of the Northwest, where no strong state pride existed. On the other hand, industrial and trading interests became convinced by Radical emphasis upon southern vindictiveness that the defeated section could not be trusted.[72]

The moral preached by Radicals—that their program was necessary to preserve the fruits of war—had its desired effect upon the general public; and as the campaign progressed, the Radicals were able to agitate more openly for Negro suffrage. With soldiers, however, the point was not emphasized. Greater energy of Radicals in organizing veterans' associations, as well as Johnson's unwise pension-agent appointments and his failure to remove suspicions of deliberate delay in bounty payments, caused soldiers to flock to the Radical standard. This, in turn, had its effect upon the civilian public; for veterans' parades, rallies, and resolutions helped convince the hesitant that the war was not over until the election was won.

Radicals themselves believed that their efforts to organize the veterans were in large part responsible for victory.[73] One G.A.R. leader expressed his conviction that the Grand Army turned the scale in Indiana:

> I stood close to Morton and the national leaders in 1866 and 1868, and I say . . . that the . . . Grand Army of the Republic in Indiana . . . did more for the security of Peace . . . throughout the nation than has ever since been done by it, or any other organization. This was Morton's judgment and the declared conviction of many other national leaders.

[72] Howard Kennedy Beale, *The Critical Year, a Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction* (New York, 1930), 224; Dubois, *Black Reconstruction*, 319.

[73] N. M. Crane to Fairchild, September 25, 1866, Fairchild MSS.; A. C. Babcock to Trumbull, November 12, 1866, Trumbull MSS.; Dilla, *Politics of Michigan*, 65.

> I know what was done in that campaign. I knew every politician in the state, active and inactive. I knew every weak place, and was enabled to help strengthen it. I was not only the Adjutant of the Department, but Secretary of the Senate. . . . The Senate and House were Republican—this was the struggle, to win the Legislature. And winning it, Indiana gave to the United States Oliver P. Morton. This is what the Grand Army did in 1866 in Indiana.[74]

Governor Morton's election to the Senate was his reward for founding the G.A.R. in Indiana. General Logan's efforts in Illinois, however, were less fruitful. After wily Trumbull supporters had wrested the society from his and Oglesby's control, it was used to defeat Logan's senatorial aspirations. Logan and Oglesby, however, continued to influence the organization and to strengthen it as a powerful force contributing to Johnson's defeat. After the election Logan hopefully requested the newly elected Radical members of the state legislature to support him for senator. He was doomed to disappointment; most of them replied that they had been instructed to vote for Trumbull. Logan had to be satisfied with his election as congressman at large.[75]

An anticlimax to the threats of soldier violence occurred shortly after the election. Five veterans, including L. Edwin Dudley, issued a proclamation calling on veterans to form an army in Washington for the protection of the "loyal majority" in the newly elected Congress. The Democratic press proclaimed this the first step toward organizing a military force subject to congressional orders,[76] but the proclamation was otherwise ineffectual. Western Radicals dropped their scheme to use the Grand Army against Johnson after the election because they postponed their impeachment plan. They had the organization ready for action, however, when the House did institute proceedings more than a year later.

Immediately after Congress convened, Radicals took revenge for Johnson's political use of pension agents. The House called up a Senate bill of January, 1866, which transferred power to

[74] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 68.

[75] Letters written during November, 1866, Logan MSS.; New York *Tribune*, January 8, 16, 1867; Chicago *Tribune*, January 14, 1867.

[76] New York *Tribune*, November 16, 1866.

appoint pension agents from the secretary of the interior to the President, thereby placing these appointments under the Senate's scrutiny. Radicals in the House, remembering the campaign activities of Johnson's new agents, made the measure more retaliatory by providing that all pension officials appointed after January 1, 1866, must resign and that Johnson must send new nominations to the Senate. The bill passed by a vote of 117 to 29.[77]

Senate debates revealed bitterness against Johnson equal to that expressed in the House. A few members doubted whether Congress could legally remove appointed officials, but the majority, on the verge of passing the Tenure of Office Act, was not to be checked by constitutional objections. On February 5, 1867, the President signed the bill; and pension agencies, destined to increase steadily in political importance, came under Radical control.[78]

By the end of 1866, the majority of soldiers had flocked, through openly or secretly political organizations, to the Radical camp. Strongly antagonistic to Negro suffrage at the close of the war, they had changed their views completely in little more than a year. Because they desired to keep war memories alive in order to win substantial public expressions of gratitude, they willingly allied themselves with politicians who had other motives for waving the bloody shirt. And as they became convinced that the cause for which they had fought was safe only in Radical hands, they developed an unquenchable hatred for the defeated Confederates. Democratic veterans' organizations passed resolutions expressing a contrary view, but these represented a small minority.

In its earliest phase, the veteran movement had been an expression of revolt against an unendurable unemployment situation and might have developed radical economic aspects. But by the end of 1866 the movement had shown itself to be radical only in politics. War experience with the efficacy of political pressure had led soldiers to carry their protests into the political sphere, where both parties bid for their support. It is doubtful

[77] Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 25; *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 2 Sess., December 5–10, 1866, pp. 25, 51.

[78] *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 2 Sess., January 22, February 5, 1867, pp. 631, 1000; *United States Statutes at Large*, XIV (1865–67), 391.

whether the most generous bestowal of jobs and offices upon veterans in 1865 could have done more than delay the development of an organized veterans' movement. As soon as one of the parties felt the need of united soldier support, it would probably have taken all the necessary steps to develop unity among servicemen.

The fortunate group that won the support of the veterans arranged a mutually beneficial coalition. Soldiers received bounty equalization and political offices, while Radicals profited from the distinction of the veterans' favor as well as from their actual votes. Although on occasion during the next score of years soldiers proved faithless to this partnership, the groundwork at least, was laid for the momentous alliance of 1888.

Chapter Four

"Soldiers of Vengeance"

Challenging Thaddeus Stevens' prediction that the military element would rule for twenty-five years, the New York *Tribune* declared that the country faced no danger from soldiers. "The army is dispersed in the various barnyards, factories and stores of the country. . . . Four years hence, new issues will be determined in the Presidential election. . . ." [1] But for a quarter-century Republicans found that their continued supremacy hinged upon the suppression of those very issues that Editor Greeley assumed would develop. This they accomplished by prolonging wartime hatreds, a policy that kept soldiers in the limelight and thereby contributed to the fulfillment of Stevens' prophecy.

Even during 1867, when, in general, both press and politicians ignored the nation's saviors, certain leaders sustained their interest in organization. Those public officials who had already reaped considerable benefit from the role of soldiers' champion continually reminded veterans of their importance. For example, Governor Fairchild repeated his appeal to soldiers in taking the first quiet steps to ensure re-election. Congressman Rutherford B. Hayes reaped rich reward for his efforts in Washington to win bounties and pensions for Ohio veterans. His popularity with soldiers was a major factor leading to his nomination for governor, and their enthusiastic support was an important element in his victory.[2]

When a group in the House invited veterans' applause by push-

[1] New York *Tribune*, March 18, 1868.

[2] Gen. George F. Rowell to Fairchild, February 6, 1867, Fairchild MSS.; H. J. Eckenrode, *Rutherford B. Hayes, Statesman of Reunion* (New York, 1930), 82–85.

ing through a bounty bill that they knew would not pass the Senate, the New York *Tribune* wrathfully declared, "We should be sorry to see the soldier vote become like the Irish vote—the shuttlecock of politics—but this is precisely what the Bounty bill tends to make it." The editor feared that "the enthusiasm of these gentlemen" would not chill until they saw "the bottom of Uncle Sam's strong box." [3]

And those leaders made good use during 1867 of the most important veterans' society, the G.A.R. Already the principal agency through which servicemen expressed their demands, the organization continued to expand after the election of 1866. Strong associations like the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League of Washington and the Kansas Veteran Brotherhood eagerly adopted the Grand Army ritual. In California almost all the members of the powerful Veteran Corps shifted their allegiance to the Grand Army soon after the first post had its auspicious beginning on the beach "under the silvery light of the moon," where the initiates took the oath "to the never-ending break of the great waves of the Pacific Ocean. . . ." Early in 1867, Connecticut became a permanent department, while indefatigable organizers established provisional departments in Rhode Island and New Jersey, and posts in Maine, Nebraska, and the District of Columbia.[4]

The enthusiasts even invaded the South. By 1867 they had established posts in Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana; and during the following year they moved into Virginia, West Virginia,

[3] *Cong. Globe,* 39 Cong., 2 Sess., February 15, 1867, 1265–66, 1271–72; anonymous letter to editor, March 6, 1875, New York *Tribune,* March 9, 1875; Letter, February 16, 1867, *ibid.,* March 12, 1867; *ibid.,* May 2, 1867; New York *Army and Navy Journal,* March 28, 1867; *Cong. Globe,* 40 Cong., 1 Sess., March 11, 18, July 1, 1867, pp. 59, 60, 82, 362, 620.

[4] Beath, *History of the Grand Army,* 494; Atchison *Daily Free Press,* July 31, 1866; *Constitution and By-Laws of Grand Encampment of Veteran Brotherhood of the State of Kansas* (pamphlet, Atchison, 1866), Library of Congress; *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 255–56; Washington *Great Republic,* February 14, 1867; *Proceedings of the Fifteen Annual Encampments Department of California 1867–1882* (San Francisco, 1895), 5, 6 (hereinafter cited as *California G.A.R. Proceedings 1867–1882*); *Proceedings Department of Maine, 1867–1877, Inclusive, With a Brief Account of the Introduction of the Order into Maine* (Augusta, 1877), 5 (hereinafter cited as *Maine G.A.R. Proceedings, 1867–1877*); *Proceedings Encampments Department of Connecticut, 1867–1881* (Bridgeport, 1883), 1 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings Connecticut G.A.R. Encampments, 1867–1881*); New York *Soldier's Friend,* July, 1867.

Florida, Mississippi, and Texas. Local officers were usually veterans who had won federal appointments in the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the postal service, or the Freedmen's Bureau. These men welcomed the society as a means of strengthening Radical domination. In Louisiana the G.A.R. was introduced by Henry Clay Warmoth, carpetbagger and appointee of fellow-Radicals to represent the "territory" of Louisiana in Congress. House extremists, who relegated representatives of the Johnson state government to the gallery, welcomed him with open arms. Warmoth stumped New England, New York, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana during the 1866 campaign and had ample opportunity to observe the Grand Army's activities in upholding the Radical cause. On his return to Louisiana, he organized a post in New Orleans. Early in 1867 a provisional department was established which by July boasted ten posts, composed mainly of colored soldiers. Shortly before Warmoth won the governorship in the election arranged by General Philip H. Sheridan, tool of Radicals, the Louisiana Grand Army's encampment unanimously chose him department commander.[5]

The organization expanded, too, in the section where it had rooted during the 1866 campaign. Early in 1867, Commander B. F. Potts reported 135 posts for Ohio, while Commander Louis Wagner placed Pennsylvania's membership at 3,500. The boast of the *Soldier's Friend* late in 1866 that the membership list numbered more than half a million was perhaps wishful estimating, but during the early months of 1867 the columns of the Washington *Great Republic* were filled with reports of the Grand Army's expansion throughout the country. Until 1868 no records were kept of numerical expansion.[6]

Late in 1866 the Grand Army's first national encampment met in the flag-bedecked opera house in Indianapolis. Delegates showed their determination to keep veterans' needs before the

[5] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 622, 628, 633, 637, 639, 643, 645, 648; Ella Lonn, *Reconstruction in Louisiana after 1868* (New York, 1918), 7, 50; Henry Clay Warmoth, *War, Politics and Reconstruction* (New York, 1930), 45, 51; New York *Tribune*, September 20, 1866.

[6] *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 10; Washington *Great Republic*, February 7, 14, May 2, 1867; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, 9; Merrill, "Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts," *loc. cit.*, 115; New York *Soldier's Friend*, November, 1866.

public. They urged state and national legislation for soldiers' widows and orphans, proposed another bounty-equalization law, and requested "positions of honor and profit" for veterans. On this final point the delegates directed the President's attention "to 'his policy' heretofore declared on this subject." [7]

The encampment's actions indicated that the Grand Army would continue to operate as a political machine. Its choice for national commander was General S. A. Hurlbut, who had aided the Radicals in the recent campaign. No direct charge of partisanship could be made against the resolutions, but their tone was Radical. The society promised to protect those in the South who had remained loyal during the war, as well as to crush treason, advance loyalty, and vindicate the rights of loyal citizens "against all combinations of force or fraud that may attempt to deny them of such rights." The encampment incorporated into the G.A.R. the Radical Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League of Washington, initiating L. Edwin Dudley as one of its representatives. Upon Stephenson's motion, it adopted as official organ the Washington *Great Republic*, voice of the Loyal Leagues and ardent advocate of the Radical cause. In his welcoming address Governor Morton urged the delegates to maintain the principles for which they had fought.[8]

Throughout 1867, the Grand Army actively supported the Radicals. No indication of partisanship came from national headquarters, but posts and departments participated enthusiastically in state and local campaigns. Particularly energetic was the new Washington Department, headed by the zealously Radical N. P. Chipman. He had attained the rank of colonel before his transfer to the War Department on special duty, and was advocate general of the military commission that sent the Andersonville jailor Captain Henry Wirz to death. Chipman resigned from the army in 1865 and established himself in Washington as attorney and claim agent. He entered upon his duties as Grand Army commander

[7] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 68; New York *Tribune*, November 22, 1866; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 22, 1866; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 9.

[8] Chicago *Tribune*, October 9, 1866; Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 49, 67, 494; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 47; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 5–9; Cincinnati *Commercial*, November 29, 1866.

with enthusiasm and soon demonstrated his efficiency as an organizer and administrator. The commander took immediate steps to build up a strongly knit organization. His first orders insisted that all attendance rules be "rigidly enforced," that members appear promptly for roll call, and that they familiarize themselves with regulations. These same orders indicated that Chipman looked upon his department as a Republican machine. Warning that "desperate party leaders" who had opposed the war might snatch from veterans "all the fruits of a glorious victory," he announced: "To avert such a calamity is now part of the work before you, comrades. . . ." [9]

Other Grand Army leaders were equally outspoken. A delegate told the Massachusetts encampment that "neither Southern nor Northern rebels" should be forgiven until they had repented. Commander Thomas L. Young, former leader of the Ohio Boys in Blue, elicited the same Radical expressions from the Ohio department that he had expected from his campaign organization. The *Great Republic*, "official National Organ of the Grand Army of the Republic and the Union League of America," added its voice to these excited pronouncements. In urging the G.A.R.'s expansion, it declared that a powerful organization was necessary as protection against the threat of Democratic supremacy. The *Great Republic* constantly proclaimed the most extreme Radical views on all political questions. As early as August, 1867, the paper started laying the groundwork for the presidential campaign: "Another victory at the ballot box . . . as decisive and more emphatic than that won on the tented field, must be achieved in '68." Veterans' organizer L. E. Dudley was traveling agent for this paper and worked assiduously to increase its circulation as a basis for campaign work. The *Soldier's Friend* was an equally faithful champion of Radical policies.[10]

Under this tutelage, Grand Army posts became efficient cogs in the Republican machine. Iowa members, extremely influential

[9] New York *Tribune*, November 21, 1865; Washington *Great Republic*, April 14, 1867; "General Order No. 1," Department of the Potomac, G.A.R., September 7, 10, 1867; "General Orders No. 3," Department of the Potomac, G.A.R., September 20, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, November, 1867.

[10] *Early History of the Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 7; Washington *Great Republic*, January 17, August 6, 1867; Dudley to Hawley, November 6, 1866, Hawley MSS.; Watrous to Fairchild, August 8, 1868, Fairchild MSS.

in local affairs, openly supported the party's gubernatorial candidate. A Massachusetts post invited General Butler to speak in behalf of a charity fund and at the same time "commit the Post in the eyes of the Public" to Radical views. Commander Wagner threw the full strength of his department into the Pennsylvania campaign. Posts everywhere passed resolutions denouncing various phases of Democratic policy.[11]

A typical instance of the use that Radicals frequently made of this co-operative attitude occurred during the House debates on the Southern Destitution bill. The resolution appropriating $1,000,000 to aid victims of southern crop failures had passed the Senate after being halved, but in the House it received unexpected opposition from several Radicals, particularly Logan and Butler. Vigorously waving the bloody shirt, these generals declared the measure a "dodge to make pensioners of rebels." Logan pointed out that the House had just defeated a bounty-equalization bill. "Without amply providing for our own widows and . . . orphans," he shouted, "we are asked to give $1,000,000 for the purpose of supplying the wants of somebody, without knowing who." Feeling soon reached a tension "that no other measure, either of this or the last session, has yet aroused." [12]

Seizing Logan's bait, G.A.R. posts condemned any attempt to aid their recent enemies. Logan and Butler proudly produced these resolutions on the floor. Butler announced, "And so long as I have the approval of the soldiers . . . I can very well do without the approval of those who were engaged in wearing out the soft cushions of the seats of this House, during the entire war." The soldier-champions succeeded in their opposition: the measure as finally passed provided for no new appropriation. When Radicals condemned the proposal to disfranchise "draft-dodgers" and deserters, Grand Army posts again helped with denunciatory comment. Radicals had considered the use of such disfranchisement during the campaign of 1866, and a soldiers' mass convention in Milwaukee in 1867 had urged it. The release

[11] Swisher, *The Iowa Department of the G.A.R.*, 35; J. L. Bennett to Butler, June 1, 1867, Butler MSS.; Commander Louis Wagner to *id.*, September 12, 1867, *ibid.;* Clayton MacMichael to Fairchild, September 18, 1867, Fairchild MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend,* October, 1867.

[12] *Cong. Globe,* 40 Cong. 1 Sess., March 9, 13, 1867, pp. 39, 48, 87; New York *Herald,* March 14, 22, 1867.

of Jefferson Davis brought still another flood of resolutions; and Horace Greeley, Davis' principal bondsman, received a full share of abuse for his generous gesture.[13]

The G.A.R. eagerly participated in the threats of violence that filled the press and the correspondence of political leaders throughout 1867. Radical governors received circulars in January warning that a quarter of a million armed Fenians, distributed throughout the North, were waiting to support the Copperheads in an attempt to overthrow the Republicans. The circular concluded, "Notify at once all . . . officers of the Grand Army of the Republic, in your respective States, to get their men in readiness and be prepared for action at a moment's notice. . . ." [14]

During the fall, administration papers became increasingly insistent in promising violence; they asserted that Johnson would use the army to force names of disfranchised southerners into the registration books and that he would then dismiss Congress and establish a military dictatorship. Radicals need not have taken these threats seriously, because they knew that the army officers were loyal to Congress. But by professing great alarm, they wrung every possible political advantage from the bluster.[15]

Moreover, they impressed the Grand Army with the necessity of preparing for the coming revolution. The *Great Republic* warned that the soldiers' late enemies continued to plot; traitors schemed to gain control of the government by thrusting representatives of "disloyal constituencies" into Congress. "The question between them and you is, shall the loyal defenders of the nation or its late assailants control and shape its future. . . . It . . . may require solution earlier than you think. Be ye prepared!" At a meeting to plan Grand Army participation in the 1867 campaign, Pennsylvania's Commander Wagner urged the

[13] *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong. 1 Sess., March 21, 22, 1867, pp. 257–58, 281; Fairchild to the Hon. P. Sawyer, October 4, 1866, Fairchild Letter Books; *id.* to Gen. H. E. Paine, October 8, 1866, *ibid.*; Paine to Fairchild, January 27, 1867, Fairchild MSS.; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 24, October 5, 8, 1867; newspaper clipping, June 25, 1867, Butler MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend*, June, July, 1867.

[14] Circular letter, Professor L. H. Doty and others to state governors, November 17, 1866, Fairchild MSS.; circular letter, L. M. Smith "to the Governors of the Loyal States," January 26, 1867, *ibid.*

[15] William A. Russ, Jr., "Was There Danger of a Second Civil War during Reconstruction?" in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXV (1938), 43–46, 54.

impeachment of Johnson and cried, "We are ready to quit workshops, factory, desk and farm, to cast aside domestic ties, and arm and fight. . . ." [16]

Members responded willingly with promises to march to the armed defense of Congress. A New Jersey post, for example, asserted its readiness to battle again for "the supremacy of the Constitution and the laws." [17] A Washington post adjutant who had lost a foot in battle wrote to Butler that the time had come to prepare for a struggle, since Johnson's affiliation with traitors meant "fight." He continued:

> We have a Soldiers [*sic*] organization in this city, known as the Grand Army of the Republic, which can be made of great use to congress situated as we are, if this thing should have to be settled by arms.
>
> We now number about 500, but are organizing colored posts, and think that within a short time, with some encouragement, we will number several thousand. Now it would not take long to organize into Companies and Regiments, and arm ourselves on short notice if an emergency required it. . . . if you think the matter plausable [*sic*], give us some encouragement. . . . All our workings are entirely secret.[18]

The Grand Army was so closely allied with Republicans that it became involved in the intrigues over choice of a presidential nominee. Both parties were keenly aware that Grant's military success would bring considerable political advantage, and both tried to win him. While the wary General refused to declare for either side, many Republicans became convinced that only he could lead them to victory. One wrote from Illinois, ". . . with Grant at the masthead the combined powers of darkness cannot beat us." [19]

[16] Washington *Great Republic,* January 17, 24, 1867; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872,* 18; New York *Tribune,* January 10, September 28, 1867; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years,* 20.

[17] Washington *Great Republic,* March 7, 1867.

[18] F. M. Thomas to Butler, September 18, 1867, Butler MSS.

[19] W. C. Prime to McClellan, December 18, 1867, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVI; William Ernest Smith, *The Francis Preston Blair Family in Politics* (New York, 1933), 2 vols., II, 388–90; J. L. Camp to Washburne, January 27, 1867, Washburne MSS.

Many Grand Army posts adopted resolutions urging the general's nomination, while the departments of Connecticut and New Jersey officially expressed their wish to see him chosen. This action, however, proved premature. First, several of the general's enemies, notably Ben Butler, were prominent in the organization and made their opposition felt. Secondly, many Radicals interpreted Grant's stolid silence as disapproval of their views, and they regarded his acceptance of the War Department after Johnson dismissed Stanton as evidence that he supported the administration. The party's conservative wing shouted for Grant, but Radicals pinned their hopes on General Sheridan, an unequivocal extremist. Under their influence, the Grand Army began moving into formation behind the new Radical hope.[20]

When Sheridan and Sickles returned to the North after Johnson removed them as military governors, the Radicals arranged ovations, which in many cases the G.A.R. managed. At St. Louis, Department Commander Carl Schurz staged a Grand Army torchlight parade, in which more than twenty posts marched to honor Sheridan. When the two generals arrived in Washington, the members of the Grand Army, led by Commander Chipman and accompanied by a blaring band and several regiments of uniformed Negro soldiers, marched to their hotels for enthusiastic demonstrations. As they moved through the East—through Newark, Columbus (Ohio), Philadelphia—they received similar G.A.R. ovations. Sickles soon dropped out to receive a "handsome reception" from his home posts in New York City and Brooklyn, but Sheridan continued his tour. The Boston posts, under Cushman's leadership, welcomed him with an impressive torchlight procession. "It was the first great stroke in the present year," believed Schurz, "against the Johnson policy." [21]

[20] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 18, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, January, February, 1867; Washington *Great Republic*, February 14, 1867; Chicago *Tribune*, September 24, 1872; Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant, Politician*, 88; New York *Journal of Commerce*, May 21, 1868.

[21] Schurz to his wife, September 10, 1867, in Joseph Schafer (ed. and translator), *Intimate Letters of Carl Schurz, 1841–1869* (Madison, 1928), 393; "General Orders No. 17," Department of Missouri G.A.R., May 17, 1867, Washington *Great Republic*, June 27, 1867; New York *Tribune*, September 24, 28, October 1, 1867; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 26, 1867; New York *Soldier's*

As a result of this carefully managed G.A.R. boom, Sheridan's prospects for the nomination rose steadily until October, when circumstances turned against him. In all the nineteen states that held elections, the returns revealed significant Democratic gains. Stunned Radicals, realizing the necessity for party unity upon a strong military candidate, turned to the choice of the conservative faction. A Democrat remarked of his opponents that although Sheridan had the "inside track," they "would find him too black and will have to take Grant. . . ." Schurz commented: ". . . the presidential campaign of next year will require on our part a genuine effort, even with Grant, whose nomination . . . appears to have been rendered practically certain by the October elections." [22]

Radicals became more determined in their efforts to mold Grant to their views. Although the general maintained his imperturbable silence, his opposition to the President in cabinet meetings was a clear indication that he was no administration supporter. By the time he broke with Johnson over the Stanton controversy, he was ready to become the Radicals' acknowledged leader.[23]

The next Radical task was to head the great veterans' political machine in the opposite direction. Many subordinate G.A.R. officers still opposed Grant; these must be persuaded or defeated. In New York the struggle centered around the contest between Henry A. Barnum and Sickles for state commander. The New York *World* commented on the latter's victory, "This looks very much as though the Grant element had control of this political society and that its influence in this state would be used to ad-

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Friend, October, 1867; report of Commander Louis Wagner, January 29, 1868, in *Pennsylvania G.A.R. Proceedings 1867–1872*, 19; "General Orders No. 8," October 3, 1867, in *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*; Merrill, "The Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts," *loc. cit.*, 115; *Proceedings of the Reunion Society of Vermont Officers*, I, 66.

[22] Schurz to his wife, September 10, 1867, in Schafer (ed.), *Intimate Letters of Carl Schurz*, 393; *id.* to *id.*, October 12, 1867, *ibid.*, 406; Stephen Thomas to Butler, September 30, 1867, Butler MSS.; Charles H. Coleman, *The Election of 1868, the Democratic Effort to Regain Control* (New York, 1933), 45–54; A. Poole to McClellan, October 9, 1867, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVI; New York *World*, January 10, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 244.

[23] New York *Journal of Commerce*, May 21, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 155, 175 n., 180, 184, 232; Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant, Politician*, 89–111.

vance the claims of Grant for President." The question of whether the G.A.R. would be used openly as a Grant machine came to a head in January, 1868, at the society's national encampment. Meanwhile the organization's leaders worked diligently for the general.[24]

The Grand Army's political activities brought the Radicals considerable immediate benefit, but they soon boomeranged. Democrats would have been blind to miss the significance of the society's activities—and unresourceful had they failed to capitalize upon them. The Democratic press inspired a wave of popular prejudice against the organization by publicizing its political undertakings and charging that it plotted violence. One paper remarked, "Our Democratic exchanges are considerably excited regarding the . . . Grand Army of the Republic, fearing it is an organization for political purposes in the interests of the Union party." In February the New York *World* announced, under the heading "A Gigantic Plot," that Radicals had organized the society to provide armed support for Congress when the time was ripe "to depose President Johnson." Radicals, it asserted, had one million veterans "pledged to take the field when the signal is given. . . . The conspiracy is evidently aimed at the whole civil and military power of the republic. Chaos is coming." Democrats in the Ohio legislature, professing fear that the society planned a military demonstration, demanded to know the whereabouts of some four thousand old muskets which had been resting in the state arsenals.[25]

The campaign to discredit the G.A.R. received a powerful impetus when the influential New York *Tribune* joined its political opponents in their attack. Undoubtedly Horace Greeley was impelled to this action by the fear that the organization's obvious policy of sustaining war hatreds would delay restoration of peaceful business relations between the sections.[26] Another possible motive was the bitter denunciation he had received from

[24] New York *World*, January 10, 1868; Evans Blake to E. B. Washburne, January 28, 1868, Washburne MSS.; John M. Read to *id.*, January 25, 1868, *ibid.*

[25] Meigs County (Ohio) *Press*, quoted in Washington *Great Republic*, August 23, 1867; *ibid.*, March 14, 1867; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 19, 1867; New York *World*, February 9, 1867; Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, March 9, 1868.

[26] New York *Tribune*, July 3, September 9, 1867.

G.A.R. posts for his magnanimous part in Jefferson Davis' release.

The *Tribune* opened fire in characteristic fashion: "A number of office-beggars and politicians, calling themselves the Grand Army of the Republic, and meeting in out-of-the-way places with grips and pass-words, are passing resolutions demanding confiscations for farms." People who wanted farms should work for them; otherwise they belonged in Sing Sing. Under the caption "Soldiers of Vengeance," the journal deplored the innumerable Grand Army resolutions that "everything is going wrong, and that nothing will go right until someone is hanged. . . ." The members, declared the *Tribune*, intended to control conventions and nominations; it added:

> We believe the soldiers should receive abundant reward. . . . But we dislike this making a privileged class. . . . From this Grand Army of the Republic, now parading through political conventions in the West, we appeal. . . . We denounce this new secret association as out of sympathy with the true Republican party. . . . It will be a sad day for our party when soldiers find no better work than to prowl over the battlefields of the past and dig up the bodies of the slain. . . . The country wants peace. . . . These men want a distracted country that offices may be gained. They would make America a Mexico. . . . let all the fearful memories of the past sink into the hell to which they belong; let us think only of wounds to be healed, of harvests to grow again, of seas once more covered with our commerce. . . .[27]

Objections from Grand Army members only spurred Greeley to further denunciations; he seized every opportunity to condemn the society.

For a time the Republican press, feigning amusement, maintained that insofar as the Democratic party had treasonable aims it might well fear the G.A.R. The Harrisburg *Telegraph* remarked, "What the boys did when in the . . . service they intend to do in the Grand Army of the Republic, namely *crush traitors*. Perhaps it is this intention which excites the apprehen-

[27] *Ibid.*, July 2, 1867 (semi-weekly issue), March 14, 1868; Washington *Great Republic*, July 12, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July, 1867.

sion of the copperheads. The fact is well calculated to do so." The *Great Republic*, admitting that the society's members were Republicans "almost to a man," asserted that when the division between parties ceased to run between patriots on one side and "the late rebels and their allies" on the other, G.A.R. men might divide in opinion.[28]

Various reactions came from veterans themselves. At the state convention of the New York Soldiers' and Sailors' National Union League, some delegates opposed incorporation into the G.A.R. because of its open partisanship. But one leader commented, "With a milk-and-water association we can do nothing"; and another reminded them, "The moment an organization ignores politics that moment it loses interest and vitality. . . ." If soldiers united they could "hold the balance of power for the next quarter of a century." Convinced, the convention voted to join the Grand Army. Yet the accusations disturbed many members. Some of them, still certain that the society's purposes were purely charitable, came to its defense.[29]

Leaders foresaw that the Democratic charges would create popular prejudice; as early as April, 1867, one of them expressed alarm at the mounting accusations. He admitted that although the majority of members sought only to enlarge "the circle of their mutual usefulness," the officers, eagerly seeking to swell the society's membership, were concerned only with "giving greater potency to an engine of their personal ambitions." Political activities, he warned, would bring disaster and public rebuke. Ambitious leaders would inevitably disagree on policy, while the public would never "composedly contemplate" a secret institution "for exclusive benefits." [30]

Other leaders, convinced that the society's too frank endorsement of Radical policy threatened disintegration, determined to make the Grand Army appear nonpartisan. Posts frequently sponsored such social occasions as balls and picnics in order to raise funds for indigent veterans; emphasis could be shifted to this charitable and social aspect of Grand Army activities. Newspapers began to deny that the organization was in any sense parti-

[28] Washington *Great Republic*, February 7, 14, March 14, 28, 1867.
[29] *Ibid.*, February 21, August 20, 23, 1867.
[30] New York *Soldier's Friend*, April, 1867.

san. When the national committee appointed by the Pittsburgh veterans' convention met in Washington to discuss effective soldier participation in the presidential campaign, the *Great Republic* suggested that they arrange "an open organization and allow the Grand Army to devote its attention to higher objects." Under the leadership of General Barnum and L. Edwin Dudley, the committee followed this suggestion and planned an organization so complete that the G.A.R.'s open co-operation in the campaigns of 1867 and 1868 was rendered unnecessary. Immediately the committee opened correspondence with veterans' societies throughout the country and with Radical soldiers in cities where no associations existed. In every state the committee had energetic representatives, some of them prominent Grand Army men.[31]

G.A.R. departments, turning their political activities into subterranean channels, officially denied partisan charges. Commander Cushman of Massachusetts ordered posts to publish no political resolutions without approval from headquarters. When Pennsylvania's Commander Wagner urged that his encampment send delegates to a Union League convention in order to "devise a plan of cooperation," the committee reported that while "probably a strong sympathy" existed between the two societies, open co-operation seemed inadvisable. In October the *Soldier's Friend* announced that it was omitting all political resolutions from posts "for *sufficient* reasons," even though they were "united in sentiment." This movement to erase the blot of partisanship was to culminate in a renunciation of political activity at the second national encampment.[32]

The partisanship stigma may well have been a major factor in the Grand Army's declining prestige. Those veterans who were drawn into the society primarily for comradeship or through the desire for some resource in times of misfortune might soon be-

[31] Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 29; Hosea W. Rood, "The Grand Army of the Republic and the Wisconsin Department," in *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, VI (1923), 288; Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, January 1, 4, May 15, 1867; Washington *Great Republic*, March 28, 1867; circular, H. A. Barnum, Chairman, Veteran's National Committee, to "Comrade," Washington, March 27, 1867, *ibid.;* Indianapolis *Journal*, March 30, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, May, 1867.

[32] *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 11; "General Orders No. 9," Boston, November 6, 1867, in *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 20; *Pennsylvania G.A.R. Proceedings 1867–1872*, 9.

come suspicious of leaders under incessant attack. And undoubtedly some Grand Army men were indifferent to political questions. A member who signed himself "Indiana" wrote, "As we understand the objects of our organization, politics is a side-dish *relished* by but few comrades, and *tasted* by still fewer." Another wrote to President Johnson that although "designing men have been constantly attempting to monopolize it politically" the G.A.R. was "not a political organization and as far as my knowledge goes political matters have never been discussed, or allowed. . . . Genl Lew Wallace—Logan or any other man who seeks to whip us into the traces of any political party, will destroy the order root and branch in proportion to the influence they exert over that body. . . ." A subtle technique might have led this member into Republican paths, but he was only antagonized by the heavy-handed leaders of 1866 and 1867.[33]

Other factors contributed to the Grand Army's difficulties. Many veterans who regarded the society's relationship to the Republican party as a partnership for mutual advantage felt that they had been cheated. Radicals, they believed, were forgetting their promises of reward for united support. A Wisconsin veteran wrote: ". . . soldiers say that there is no use sticking by a party that will not stick by us or by resoles [*sic*] of Congress. . . ." A New Jersey G.A.R. man complained that veterans could not find employment even though "our own party has possession of the State and City government." Even the *Great Republic* reminded its sponsors, "The soldiers as a class have sustained the Republican party, and to that party they naturally look for . . . recognition. . . ." [34]

Apparently Republicans, regarding servicemen as their natural allies, had decided that further concessions to hold them were unnecessary. In New York, to be sure, the Union ticket included three veterans, while the Democratic convention ignored the former soldiers. In Chicago over half the Republican candidates

[33] Washington *Great Republic*, August 20, 23, 1867; P. F. Hyatt to Johnson, March 2, 1868, Johnson MSS.

[34] J. W. Shaffer to Washburne, September 19, 1866, Washburne MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend*, January, February, April, May, 1867; Washington *Great Republic*, February 7, 21, March 7, September 6, 1867; New York *Herald*, July 17, 1867; L. T. Slagton to Fairchild, October 2, 1867, Fairchild MSS.; Alfred Sears to Butler, March 24, 1867, Butler MSS.

for county offices were veterans, and the *Tribune* assumed that failure to support them was evidence of disloyalty. But these were widely heralded exceptions; in general, the Republican appeal to the soldier vote echoed but feebly that of the preceding year.

When Philadelphia Democrats nominated two veterans while Republicans "forgot the soldier," the city's Grand Army members supported their comrades. It was a close election; there may have been foundation for the boast that this factor brought victory to the Democratic state ticket.[35]

The soldiers' waning interest was another reason for the Grand Army's decline after the first few months of 1867. Thousands of veterans, unable to find employment and unsettled about their future, had regarded the organization as a means of obtaining jobs or bounties. To many, just out of their teens, the Grand Army was a plaything and political campaigns a diversion. After their curiosity was satisfied and their livelihood was secure, they allowed their names to be dropped from the rolls. Some department commanders, too, lost interest; Stephenson blamed the decline of the Illinois Department on Commander Palmer, who had decided not to enter the race for governor. Logan was urged to increased "Efforts to rescuscitate the order and overcome Palmer's apathy." "He will do nothing but aside from his name and reputation he is an in 'cubus' [*sic*] upon us," the Grand Army's adjutant general commented.[36]

A further source of weakness was the nature of central control. Some department commanders, like Chipman, displayed real ability for administration, but no such efficiency was evident at national headquarters. General Hurlbut devoted little time to supervision; and Adjutant General Stephenson, who directed the work, was bored by such prosaic matters as methodical conduct of office

[35] New York *Tribune*, October 23, 28, 30, November 1, 15, 1867; Bessie Louise Pierce, *History of Chicago* (New York, 1937–40), 2 vols., II, 289; New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 29, 1868.

[36] Stephenson to Logan, January 30, 1868, Logan MSS.; Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 30; Rood, "The Grand Army of the Republic and the Wisconsin Department," *loc. cit.*, 288; New York *Soldier's Friend*, November, 1868 (monthly issue), November 7, 1868 (weekly issue). (On June 27, 1868, in good time for the presidential campaign, the *Soldier's Friend* began weekly publications; it also continued its regular monthly issues, which will be identified as such hereinafter when confusion might arise.)

business. He kept no files, no copies of letters sent out, no records of the organization and growth of departments. The doctor even neglected applications for instructions and supplies; the larger departments printed their own materials.[37]

Hurlbut failed to convene an encampment during the year, although the constitution provided for an annual meeting. In August a member asked the *Great Republic* to stir up the rank and file against this inaction, since complaints to headquarters brought no response. The writer believed it "highly important . . . that we should meet before the October elections; for that work our organization should be what it now is not—thorough and complete." [38]

Stephenson indignantly replied that the first encampment the preceding November had taken the place of the January meeting for which the constitution called. He denied negligence and complained that departments were contributing nothing to the support of headquarters. The eastern departments had repudiated Hurlbut's assessment of ten cents on each member; the money received had been insufficient to pay for postage—"and yet the demands made upon these headquarters are but little short of those on the War Department at Washington." [39]

Indiana's commander suggested to several departments that a conference be held. As a result, a group of influential members met at Philadelphia. The senior vice-commander consented to call an encampment if headquarters failed to do so. Finally, in December, 1867, General Hurlbut announced that the assembly would meet the following month at Philadelphia.[40]

At this encampment, delegates from twenty-one departments heard the results of their national officers' lax administration. Theoretically these delegates represented some 240,000 members, but delinquent departments comprised more than 1,400 posts. Although headquarters had spent $1,637.56 for printing, clerks'

[37] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 36; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 90; *Journal 28th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 238; *Address of Major A. S. Cushman*, 8.

[38] "C.M.," August 10, 1867, to editors, in Washington *Great Republic*, August 16, 1867.

[39] Stephenson, August 24, 1867, to editors, *ibid.*, August 30, 1867.

[40] "General Orders No. 17," G.A.R., September 4, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, October 10, 1868; call, December 2, 1867, *ibid.*, January, 1868; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 90, 91.

salaries, office rent, and other expenses, it had managed to collect but $352. Three departments had contributed the major portion of this sum: Louisiana, $130; Pennsylvania, $70; and Kansas, $50. The only encouraging report was Stephenson's announcement that through the society's efforts thousands of starving widows and orphans had received food and clothing, and thousands of disabled veterans had found work.[41]

Startled at the society's condition, the delegates sought remedies. They placed an immediate assessment of one dollar on each post, and in an effort to improve organization they abolished district officers. Finally, they revised the ritual.[42]

Those who favored Grant as Republican presidential nominee confidently expected to push through the encampment some official expression in the general's favor. Scattered post resolutions had continued to urge him, while the Kansas encampment had re-formed in mass meeting after adjournment and requested his nomination. One paper announced that the national encampment would "demand to be led by the man they followed to victory in 1865." [43]

But against this idea two groups joined forces: those who disliked Grant and those who believed that open political activity was ruining the Grand Army. The latter's proposal for a nonpartisanship pledge provoked a heated discussion, which threatened to disrupt the convention. Proponents of the resolution insisted that the society could not survive if it continued to dabble in politics; indeed, partisanship was already destroying it in the West. They finally carried their amendment: "This association does not design to make nominations for office or to use its influence as a secret organization for partisan purposes." One member commented in disgust that it was "not worth the time to argue that the Grand Army was not at that time political. It was, and the country knew it." [44]

[41] New York *Soldier's Friend*, January, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, January 18, 1868; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 14, 15, 24.

[42] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 15, 19, 24; Beath, *History of the Grand Army*, 80; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 217.

[43] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 19, 1867; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, January 6, 11, 1868; Philadelphia *Press*, January 15, 1868.

[44] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, December 19, 1867; New York *Soldier's*

Certainly the encampment's choice for new officers indicated no real change in policy. It elected the vociferously Radical John Alexander Logan commander in chief, while J. T. Owen, energetic organizer of Pennsylvania veterans, and the equally Radical Joseph R. Hawley, of Connecticut, became vice-commanders. N. P. Chipman's views on the use of the Grand Army as a Republican machine did not prevent his election as adjutant general. Moreover, the assembly chose the ardently Radical *Great Republic* and *Soldier's Friend* as the "channels through which all published official information shall be communicated relating to the G.A.R." The Cincinnati (Ohio) *Republic* was the third favored journal.[45]

But throughout the official sessions, the opponents of openly partisan activities exercised a restraining influence upon proceedings. A committee decided that no action should be taken on the Union League's proposal for co-operation between the two societies. The resolutions, presented by Chipman, mildly asked Congress for laws granting preference to veterans in government appointments and protecting such appointees from discrimination in personnel reductions. Radical hatred for Confederates, however, crept out in the demand that Congress permit only Union soldiers and sailors to be buried in national cemeteries.[46]

Checked in the official sessions, the Grant supporters seized their opportunity on the last night, when the delegates gathered in open mass convention. Generals Hurlbut and Sickles made "unqualifiedly radical" addresses, and the convention unanimously recommended Grant for the presidency "in the implicit confidence" that his policy would "secure the full fruits of our exertions." The delegates expressed approval for the suggestion of a Radical veterans' assembly that a national soldiers' convention meet in May to discuss presidential nominees.[47]

Friend, January, February, 1867, August 29, 1868; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 139.

[45] Cleveland *Daily Herald*, June 7, 1866; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 23, 26.

[46] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 19, 25, 26.

[47] Chicago *Republican*, January 18, 1868; Washington *National Intelligencer*, January 18, 1868; Philadelphia *Press*, January 17, 1868; New York *Tribune*, January 18, 1868; Washington *National Republican*, January 17, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, January 18, 1868.

This action seemed conclusive, and but few Grand Army leaders continued to oppose making the society a band wagon for Grant. Stephenson, to be sure, felt that "in the G.A.R. which Must control the convention there is no Enthusiasm for Grant." But Stephenson was prejudiced; he believed that only Logan could win a solid soldier vote for Republicans. He assured the general: ". . . with Ohio Indiana Ills [*sic*] Iowa and Missouri and some other states you will get their votes and Enthusiasm Whilst Grant gets their passive support. . . ." [48]

The founder's views to the contrary, as spring approached the Grand Army wheeled definitely into line to push the attack for the hero of Appomattox. The Indiana Department, in annual encampment soon after the national assembly, gave official expression to its desire to see Grant in the White House. "We are organizing a Post of the Grand Army of the Republic here," wrote a veteran from Cresco, Iowa, "which will be virtually a Grant club." Another wrote from Sterling, Illinois, "I organized the Grand Army of the Republic in this congressional Dist [*sic*]. . . . I . . . have no Doubt but the Grand Army Will Labor for [Grant's] election, With the Same vigor and determination with which they carried on the Atlantic Campaign. . . ." [49]

A new period in the G.A.R.'s development began with Logan's administration. His first step was to move headquarters from Springfield to Washington, where he could assume personal supervision. He and Adjutant General Chipman saw eye to eye on the necessity for firm control, and they immediately began to centralize the society. Early in 1868 Logan issued orders designed to place the Grand Army on a strong working basis. Previous military experience, he announced, had taught the value of consolidated effort: "Discipline lies at the foundation of all enterprises which look for their success to the co-operation of individuals scattered over large territory. Orders must be promptly obeyed, and the rules and regulations strictly enforced, if we are

[48] Stephenson to Logan, January 30, 1868, Logan MSS.

[49] Cincinnati *Gazette*, January 30, 1868; Charles P. Brown to Washburne, January 17, 1868, Washburne MSS.; W. M. Kilgour to *id.*, February 4, 1868, *ibid.*; James Brisbin to *id.*, February 10, 1868, *ibid.*; Indianapolis *Journal*, January 17, 1868; E. B. Payne to *id.*, March 6, 1869, Washburne MSS.

to hope for any good result. . . ." Under Chipman's efficient direction, correspondence was opened for the first time with the society's "leading members" and with the "various departments and commands throughout the United States." [50]

Department commanders who had followed their own whims under Hurlbut's casual administration disliked the new policy. Logan and Chipman remained obdurate, and the latter continued his reorganization on an efficient basis. By midsummer he could proudly proclaim, "The Grand Army . . . now comprises over 2,000 posts, with an aggregate membership of over a quarter of a million men, and has become a permanent and stable institution. Its posts are the weekly resort of the soldiers and sailors. . . ." [51]

Republican papers eagerly grasped the G.A.R.'s nonpartisanship pledge as a club to combat Democratic accusations. Under the heading "A Nightmare Shaken Off," the *Soldier's Friend* admitted that the public had been alarmed lest the Grand Army should, under demagogue leaders, create a military despotism. But the encampment, refusing "to entertain any political proposition," had stood "simply and grandly on its cornerstone of benevolence and patriotism." [52]

The restriction gave politicians no immediate worry. And apparently it had no effect whatever on many Grand Army leaders; they simply ignored it. One general assured a New York post that the G.A.R. must renew the combat against its former enemies and their "would-be restorers. . . . For their conquest the North looks to your Association in its veteran phalanx of strength." Stephenson, indeed, believed that the society's importance justified party financing. Informing Logan that headquarters was never well supplied with funds because "nobody

[50] "General Orders No. 6," February 18, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend,* April, 1868; *ibid.,* February, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal,* February 5, 1868; "General Orders No. 3," September 20, 1867, in New York *Soldier's Friend,* November, 1867; Chipman's report, May, 1869, *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.,* 38.

[51] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic,* 135–36; "Address to all who may desire to contribute," from Adjutant General's Office, August 1, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend,* August 15, 1868.

[52] New York *Soldier's Friend,* February, 1868.

pays in," he remarked, "We are thoroughly organized or in a way to be very soon. . . . and now let these *monied men* come up and foot the bill. If a Republican President is elected it is the G.A.R. that will do it and I think they are generally convinced of it. Therefore let them come out and assist." [53]

The commander in chief, also disregarding the resolution, quietly planned to use the society on both local and national levels as a servant to Radicals. He expected posts to support local Radical nominees while in the national arena the society performed more important work. As the struggle between Johnson and Congress grew increasingly bitter, Logan held the G.A.R. ready to give armed opposition to the President.[54]

In August, 1867, Johnson had finally dismissed Secretary Stanton, whose continued intrigues with Radicals had sabotaged the executive program. But the following January the Senate refused, under the terms of the Tenure of Office Act, to confirm the removal. Grant, the new secretary, immediately turned in his keys; and Stanton triumphantly resumed control. Johnson believed the law unconstitutional; his idea throughout had been to maintain his appointee in control of the department in order to force the act to a court test. In permitting the keys to fall into Stanton's hands, Grant had thwarted this plan. Moreover, the angry President regarded the general's behavior as disloyal and in violation of an express promise. On two occasions Johnson tried to persuade Sherman to accept the post, but the general had no desire to become involved in the imbroglio.[55]

Late in February the Democratic National Committee met in Washington to prepare for its nominating convention. Possibly Johnson believed that by some bold stroke in defiance of Congress he might force himself on the committee's attention as the obvious presidential candidate. Whatever his motive, he suddenly abandoned his dilatory tactics on February 21, and without con-

[53] Address of General John Watts de Peyster to New York G.A.R. Post No. 8, March 18, 1868, *ibid.*, June, 1868; Stephenson to Logan, January 30, 1868, Logan MSS.

[54] Giles A. Smith to Logan, April 15, 1868, Logan MSS.; James Rea to *id.*, February 3, 1868, *ibid.*

[55] "Monthly Record of Current Events: the Impeachment," in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (New York, 1850–), XXXVII (1868), 139; Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant, Politician*, 98–114.

sulting his advisers appointed General Lorenzo Thomas secretary ad interim.[56]

As adjutant general, Thomas was Stanton's subordinate. The two men had reportedly been on bad terms for years, and the impatient secretary had sent Thomas out on various missions in order to be rid of him. It was with satisfaction, therefore, that the vain old man entered his superior's office to present the President's order. Surprised, Stanton asked if he might have time to remove his personal property. But while Thomas was out of the office, he conferred with Grant; and when the general returned, he announced that he might not obey the instructions. Stanton, stern and nervously irritable, was more than a match for the aspirant; Thomas quickly bowed himself out.[57]

The winner of the first encounter rushed a note to the House; at the same time an announcement from Johnson arrived at the Senate. The effect was electrifying. For two years Radicals had longed to impeach the President; here was their opportunity. In turmoil the senators barred the doors to spectators and went into executive session. Increasingly large crowds huddled about the doors as the news spread, and newspaper reporters gathered like bees. While the Senate voted that the President had no power to dismiss his secretary, rumors developed to terrifying proportions.[58]

Meanwhile crowds thronged the hotels and swarmed about the War Department. A committee of agitated Radical senators hurried to Stanton and begged him to hold his ground. Tears flowed freely, and the secretary vowed that he would never forsake Congress. Urgent letters arrived from other senators, among them a single-word note from Charles Sumner: "Stick." Fearing forcible ejection at any moment, Stanton decided to stay in office quite literally. He ordered his meals sent in, and at night he slept on a sofa in his office. An unsympathetic newspaper remarked

[56] Georges Clemenceau, *American Reconstruction, 1865–1870, and the Impeachment of President Johnson* (New York, 1928), 151.

[57] Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 22, 1868; New York *World*, February 22, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 284; *Trial of Andrew Johnson, President of the United States . . .*, published by order of the Senate (Washington, 1868), 3 vols., I, 418, 419 (hereinafter cited as *Impeachment Trial*).

[58] Russ, "Was There Danger of a Second Civil War during Reconstruction?" *loc. cit.*, 48, 49 n.

that he and his congressional friends were undoubtedly "in no lack of tipple." [59]

General Thomas, enjoying the rapidly mounting excitement, remained downtown most of the evening. He confided to friends that if in the morning his demand for the department was refused, he would apply for troops, and that if he found the door barred, he would break it down. Later, while he nonchalantly attended a masquerade ball, Stanton learned of these conversations.

Despite the armed guard that Stanton had obtained from Grant, the frightened secretary suddenly felt inadequately protected. He swore out a warrant, and before the boastful old Thomas had time to breakfast the next morning, officers appeared to arrest him. Taken before a judge who was a known tool of Stanton, the befuddled general was released on $5,000 bail. Then, after reporting to Johnson, Thomas moved once more upon the War Department. The secretary had spent the night there and now, surrounded by Congressmen, sat like a bewhiskered lord amid his courtiers.

A terse exchange of orders ensued; Thomas insisted upon taking possession, while Stanton sternly demanded that he execute the functions of adjutant general. Finally Thomas crossed the hall to another official's room, and the secretary followed, still issuing orders. Again the general was the first to surrender. The President's appointee remarked sadly to the choice of Congress, "The next time you have me arrested, please do not do it before I get something to eat."

All solicitude, Stanton quickly put his arm around Thomas's shoulders, ran his hand through the general's hair, and turned to an officer.

"Schriver," he called, "you have got a bottle here; bring it out."

Schriver did indeed have a bottle as a "dyspepsia remedy." He produced it, but only a few drops remained. Stanton shared them with his adversary; then he sent out for a full bottle. When it arrived, the two contenders had another drink. "Now," remarked Stanton, "This at least is neutral ground." On that note the general

[59] Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle,* February 22, 23, 1868; New York *World,* February 22, 1868; Mrs. John A. Logan, "The Loyal G.A.R.," in Washington *National Tribune,* September 1, 1887.

withdrew from the field, vanquished for the moment but a little happier.[60]

As public tension mounted, Democratic and conservative papers urged the President to violence, and again Radicals cried that war was coming. Rumors of Johnson's plans circulated rapidly. Grant, people whispered, had been arrested. Governor Thomas Swann's visit to the White House strengthened the story that he was preparing the Maryland militia, at least ten thousand strong, for a march on Washington. It was reported that the secretary of the navy, "Grandmother" Welles, had offered Johnson the services of four hundred marines stationed in the city.[61] If some Radicals merely made political capital of these rumors, others actually believed the President might seize control of the War Department and maintain his position by force.

On that turbulent Washington's Birthday, excited crowds moved toward the Capitol. "The tramping of thousands of feet," remarked a reporter, "began to sound already like the tread of an army." To frightened Washingtonians, the White House and the Capitol had become castles occupied by opposing forces. Anxious questions flew about; the word "revolution" was whispered everywhere. Inside the Capitol the massive stairways, the corridors—even the dark recesses of the basement—were jammed; and the House galleries had been packed since early morning.[62] Numerous descriptions have been written of the highly theatrical impeachment debate and its most spectacular participant, the feeble, club-footed Radical leader, Thaddeus Stevens.

Real danger of violence hung over the country in these dramatic moments, but it was not to be found in the wild expressions of Old Thad and his confederates, in the nervous tension of the anxious crowds in Washington and other cities, or in the savage threats flung by partisan newspapers. The actual peril lay in the

[60] *Impeachment Trial*, 427–41; New York *Times*, February 22, 1868; New York *World*, February 24, 1868; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 22, 1868; Washington *National Republican*, February 24, 25, 1868; "Monthly Record of Current Events: the Impeachment," *loc. cit.*, 138.

[61] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, February 24, 1868; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 24, 1868; New York *World*, February 24, 25, 1868; New York *Tribune*, February 24, 1868; St. Louis *Daily Times*, February 25, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 291.

[62] New York *World*, February 24, 1868.

quiet plans of a scowling House member, one of the most venomous of Johnson's opponents, who sat heedless of the debate. General Logan's conviction that the President intended to take the War Department by force seemed confirmed by Thomas' boasts. Logan was determined to block any such contingency, and as head of the G.A.R. he believed he was in a position to do so effectively. While House members declaimed to packed galleries, Logan grasped a pencil and hastily scribbled a note to Chipman, who was still G.A.R. adjutant general as well as commander of District posts.

"It seems that the city is filling up with a Suspicious Class of men," the general wrote.

> That may mean harm Tho no demonstration *has been made*. The House will impeach A. J. and a Row may ensue.
>
> I hope you will quietly and secretly organize all our boys so that they can assemble at a signal that you may agree upon to report at Hd Qur. &c. ready to protect the Congress of the U. S. in the exercise of their lawful duties. This must be done quietly, and no indiscreet persons must understand or know anything about it, and no demonstration of any kind must be made at all, if no necessity shall occur for us to act at any time then the fact that we are on the alert, must never be known as it would effect many of our boys that hold office &c.
>
> J. A. Logan
>
> All of this must be done by verbal communication as no official orders must be made on the subject at present, or until a necessity might arise to protect The Government against Traitors to it, be discreet, and come and see me tonight. L.[63]

And while attention was centered on the House, where Congressmen spat venom throughout the afternoon and evening, Chipman quietly carried out his instructions. In his own words, he "organized the members of the Grand Army Posts and held them in readiness to rally at a signal in defense of Secretary Stanton or of the Congress." He and Logan formed battalions under

[63] Logan to Chipman, February 22, 1868, Logan MSS.; Chipman to Mrs. Logan, June 5, 1907, *ibid.*

former officers and provided countersigns that would bring the men instantly to the War Office. Sentinels stood on duty round the clock at various places in the city, particularly outside the White House and the War Department. Many of these men had no idea why arms and ammunition had been issued to them. Mrs. Logan later remarked, "Through all these trying hours the faithful Grand Army of the Republic were the unknown, silent sentinels that guarded the Capitol and kept vigilant watch. . . ." [64]

Logan, the last speaker that night, proclaimed to the crowded House that Johnson was planning to inaugurate a revolution. Then, crossing the grounds in the pale light from the dome lantern, the general hurried to the War Department to assure Stanton that the G.A.R. was prepared for any emergency and that its members were quietly patrolling the city. The secretary was still entrenched in his private office; and on this and succeeding nights, Logan, self-appointed protector, occupied a cot beside him.[65]

Despite Logan's air of secrecy, it soon became public knowledge that he had offered to station 125 Grand Army men at the War Office to "stand by Mr. Stanton at all hazards." And, indeed, excitement became so intense in Washington that for a time it seemed that the G.A.R. guards might actually use their guns. One paper declared: ". . . we are given to understand that blood will flow in our streets in a day or two." Stanton knew that if he left the War Department, General Thomas would immediately take possession. Expecting any moment an attempt at forcible ejection, he remained entrenched there day and night except for a brief daily walk under guard. General Logan was occupied all day as one of the managers of the impeachment trial; but every night, after his conference with the G.A.R. staff in his rooms at Willard's, he hurried to the War Department.[66]

And on that bleak, cold Sabbath, a tumultuous day filled with

[64] Chipman to Mrs. Logan, *ibid.;* Logan, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife,* 224; *id.,* "The Loyal G.A.R.," *loc. cit.; Grand Army of the Republic: America's Legion of Honor* (pamphlet, n.d.), 8; Beath, *History of the Grand Army,* 93.

[65] New York *World,* February 24, 1868; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle,* February 24, 1868; *Grand Army of the Republic,* 8; Logan, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife,* 224, 225.

[66] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal,* February 22, 1868; Chicago *Republican,* February 22, 1868; Logan, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife,* 225.

sensational rumors, messages began pouring in on Logan from the far-flung departments and posts of the Grand Army. For more than a year the *Great Republic* had been shouting for impeachment; when it finally came, members needed no prodding to express themselves in violent language. "Today the mask is stripped from the features of this demon," cried one paper in alarm, "and it boldly offers sword and firebrand to its great patron at Washington. From all parts of the country, say the telegrams, the circles of this military order are tendering their services to Congress." [67]

Logan received many offers of armed assistance. From St. Louis came the wire, "The Grand Army of the Republic of Missouri will give 50,000 men to carry out the action of Congress." The Minnesota G.A.R. declared, "This department will respond promptly to any call in defense of the Government." Commander Palmer, offering military support, stated that Illinois posts were constantly wiring their readiness for immediate action. From New York came the message, "We are ready." From individual posts, too, Logan received numerous offers of aid. As the New York *Herald* observed, the society was "in a great state of excitement"; Republican papers boasted that it was prepared "100,000 strong" to defend Congress by arms.[68]

Many of the war heroes, indeed, were itching for a fight. One inquired of John Covode, "Are the old boys in blue wanted right off? We will come on the click of the telegraph." Another wrote to Butler, "You have got the scoundrel now by the throat. Shake him over the jaws of hell and let him drop in. My old regiment is at the service of the government. . . . we could take the field in 12 hours." Wisconsin's Governor Fairchild, high in G.A.R. councils, was overwhelmed with offers. He wrote excitedly to his sister, "Yesterday we were all in commotion on account of receipt of the news. . . . My room was soon crowded with old veterans to offer their services in case trouble and blows come—if it does I'll accept them and hurry troops to W, with all possi-

[67] Washington *Great Republic*, January 17, February 14, 28, August 13, 16, September 13, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September, 1867; New York *Journal of Commerce*, February 27, 1868.

[68] New York *Evening Mail*, February 27, 1868; Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, February 26, 1868; New York *Tribune*, February 24, 1868; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 26, 27, 28, 1868; New York *Herald*, February 25, 1868; St. Louis *Daily Times*, February 26, March 4, 1868.

ble speed. If it does come we will stamp all devilish traitors out of existence before peace comes again. . . . I have already full arrangements made for the organization of several regiments. . . ." [69]

He wrote similar letters to Schuyler Colfax and Stanton; and he informed Senator T. O. Howe that veterans from all parts of the state were offering him their services: "Thousands are ready to spring to arms to crush [Johnson] and those who shall attempt to sustain him." To one soldier he wrote, "If Johnson should dare to resist Congress you shall have an opportunity to put on your sword again and battle for the country." Other Radical governors, too, were piling "fuel on the flames of discord" by wiring offers of troops to congressmen. Governor Fletcher telegraphed that Missouri men would rally with bayonets "to crush nullification, headed by Andy Johnson," while the governors of Iowa, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and New York sent similarly threatening messages. General Wallace hurried down to confer with Logan about using the Grand Army in the crisis, but the commander in chief was waiting for some move from Johnson before taking action. The President, however, did nothing. Perhaps he saw little that he could do; dilatory tactics had left him stranded. General Grant, in command of the armies, had gone over to the Radicals, as had also General William H. Emory, commander of the troops around Washington. Before the crisis, Secretary Welles had warned Johnson that the Radicals would arrest and imprison him if they dared, and he had asked the President if he could count on any military support in case of a collision. Pacing the room in agitation, Johnson admitted that he could not. He would make Washington a military department, he declared, and order General Sherman to its command. But the general, who had fled to St. Louis when he saw the political storm brewing, was determined to stay out of the conflict. He refused the appointment. Johnson became painfully aware of his position when he learned that on the evening of Thomas' appointment, all officers under Emory's command had been called back to duty from social functions. Alarmed, he called Emory to ask what

[69] New York *Tribune*, February 24, 1868; Hawkins to Butler, February 22, 1868, Butler MSS.; R. Bernard to *id.*, February 27, 1868, *ibid.*; Fairchild to his sister, February 21, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, January 8, 1868, *ibid.*

orders had been issued and at whose request. But he got no satisfaction from that Radical; Emory promptly spread the tale that the President had sought aid from his troops and that he had coldly replied, "You can't use me." [70]

Johnson's champions worried at his inactivity. One urged him to demand that Congress submit the issue to the courts, and if Congress refused, to seize the leading Radicals: "Fifty armed men would be all that were necessary." Welles condemned such counsel, since fifty men would be easy meat for the Radical-controlled army; but he too was alarmed. "While you, Mr. President, are resorting to no extreme measures," he warned, "the conspirators have their spies,—have command of the troops." [71]

Equally worried over the increasingly violent threats of the Grand Army, the executive's friends tried to counteract the influence of that body by organizing veterans in Johnson's favor. A few weeks before the impeachment, the Andrew Johnson Veteran Volunteer Club of New York called a mass meeting which approved Johnson's resistance to congressional "fanatics and tyrants." After impeachment resolutions were passed, Washington members of the Conservative Army and Navy Union listened to harangues and pledged their "lives fortunes and sacred honors to uphold the Chief Magistrate" should Congress precipitate war. St. Louis Democrats organized a veterans' association "designed to counteract the influence of the Grand Army of the Republic," while in New York City, administration supporters formed a soldiers' organization pledged to give Johnson armed support. The latter society's president claimed to have a hundred

[70] Fairchild to Colfax, February 27, 1868, Fairchild Letter Books, II, 260; *id.* to Stanton, February 27, 1868, *ibid.*, 262; *id.* to Hon. T. O. Howe, February 24, 1868, *ibid.*, 263; Otis to Fairchild, February 29, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; Henry Sandford to *id.*, February 24, 1868, *ibid.;* Fairchild to Otis, February 29, 1868, Fairchild Letter Books, II, 263; New York *Journal of Commerce*, February 27, 1868; St. Joseph (Mo.) *Morning Daily Herald*, February 28, 1868; Washington *National Intelligencer*, February 25, 1868; Chicago *Republican*, February 25, 1868; New York *Evening Mail*, February 27, 1868; St. Louis *Times*, February 25, 26, 1868; Washington *Chronicle*, February 27, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 272, 282, 289; John Sherman, *Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate and Cabinet, an Autobiography* (New York, 1895), 2 vols., I, 416, 421; Sherman, *Memoirs*, II, 414, 428, 429–33; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 24, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, February 24, 1868; *Impeachment Trial*, I, 233–36, 238, 253–56.

[71] Welles, *Diary*, III, 288, 289.

thousand men ready to march on Washington, but unsympathetic police invaded its Broadway office and seized the membership lists. In general, Democratic efforts to organize veterans seemed feeble in contrast to aggressive Radical tactics.[72]

But if the President's proponents were unable to match the efficient Radical technique, Johnson did receive from soldiers numerous unsolicited offers of military aid. One assured him he could have an army of a million within ten days, while another wrote, "Eject Stanton, and never allow yourself to be arrested. . . . We have Captains, Cols., and Generals who are anxious to rally to your support. . . . never surrender!" Still another offered him a permanent bodyguard of seventy-five men.[73]

While agitated messages were pouring in on congressmen as well as on the President, General Thomas visited the War Department Monday morning to announce for the third time that he would take control. Stanton, his demeanor even fiercer than usual, sternly refused and followed the old man as he bustled from office to office making futile demands for the department's mail. Thomas finally left, reported his failure to Johnson, and then, feeling definitely ill, took a carriage home.

Excitement was rapidly approaching a climax; neither cold nor snow kept people inside that stormy Monday. Troops were held ready for any emergency. The funeral procession of a prominent major moved through the streets unattended by military escort because authorities feared the appearance of armed soldiers would heighten the tension. At the Capitol the heavily augmented police force grew nervous when news arrived that several hundred men had left Philadelphia with the avowed intention of intimidating Congress. The House, packed with waiting spectators, was in half-shadow; the dim twilight of the storm scarcely penetrated the stained-glass ceiling. Radicals, to dramatize impeachment, had set back the House clock so that on the journal the vote would appear to have been taken on Washington's Birthday. At 4:30

[72] New York *Tribune*, January 27, February 26, 27, 1868; Washington *National Intelligencer*, February 26, 1868; Washington *Evening Star*, February 26, 28, 1868.

[73] E. M. Yerger to Johnson, March 26, 1868, Johnson MSS.; J. B. Stoll to *id.*, February 26, 1868, *ibid.;* James Haman to *id.*, February 25, 1868, *ibid.;* Capt. S. Wells Gear to *id.*, February 27, 1868, *ibid.;* Richard S. Campbell to *id.*, March 9, 1868, *ibid.;* Russ, "Was There Danger of a Second Civil War during Reconstruction?" *loc. cit.*, 49, 58.

debate ended, and in a hushed silence the President was impeached by a strict party vote.[74]

Meanwhile the feeling in other cities was scarcely less tense. The spirit of 1861, cried one paper, was "blazing over the country." General Sherman wrote from St. Louis that only "the floating politicians here share the excitement at Washington," but this was not the case elsewhere. New York was frantic; businessmen neglected their ledgers; clerks talked politics instead of trade with customers; anxious crowds collected at newspaper bulletins. "Everywhere, men . . . move as though they saw great danger around them," remarked one paper. "Never was a public crisis so deeply felt as this, and not even when Fort Sumter was bombarded did political feeling run so high. Then the question was merely one of war, and there was not much thought of the consequence, but now the minds of most people run on anarchy, and horrors, and ruin." Business was reported to be prostrate. Many buyers were leaving without goods, while those who stayed were waiting to see what happened at Washington before purchasing. From St. Louis, General Sherman warned his brother in the Senate that if war came ". . . you may count on 200,000 men against you in the South. . . . On this question, the whites there will be more united than on the old issue of Union and Secession." [75]

Still Johnson did nothing. Undoubtedly he would have resisted the arrest and imprisonment so often threatened by Radicals, but it soon became clear that he planned no action that could be construed as a false move. Since Logan was watching, cat-like, for an excuse to pounce, presidential hesitation had now unwittingly become a policy of masterly inactivity. When Johnson later asked the general for an explanation of the Grand Army's defiance, Logan admitted that had the President sought either control of the army or forcible possession of the War Department he would

[74] New York *World*, February 25, 1868; New York *Times*, February 25, 1868; Washington *National Republican*, February 25, 1868; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 25, 1868.

[75] New York *Tribune*, February 24, 1868; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, February 25, 1868, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 312; St. Louis *Times*, March 1, 1868.

have found the veterans "ready to respond to the call of their country." [76]

But although Johnson still refused to recognize anyone but Thomas as secretary of war, he kept tight rein on the old general, who was obsessed with the necessity for getting control of the department's mail. When Thomas' suit came up in the district court, he was instructed to submit to imprisonment in order to apply for a writ of habeas corpus. This would achieve what had been Johnson's goal from the beginning, for it would take the Tenure of Office Bill into the Supreme Court for a decision on constitutionality. But the judge, who had been conferring secretly with Stanton, insisted upon discharging the general.[77] As for Stanton, the secretary *de facto* was taking no chances; he remained in his office day and night.

Congressmen, too, remained on edge. On February 27, they whispered excitedly about the 165 pounds of nitroglycerin that had been obtained from a New York company on a forged order. Was there a plot to blow up the Capitol? When the warning letter from the New York police superintendent was read to the House, the large additional police force surrounding the Capitol seemed inadequate. Suddenly "coats and hats were in demand, and a general exodus took place." Secretary Welles remarked in scorn, "As Stanton, Grant, and the Radical Congress have assumed the entire control of the military, to the exclusion of the President, who is Commander-in-Chief, the apprehension seems to be that the Adjutant-General and his friends have resorted to nitroglycerine." [78]

But although Stanton and his congressional champions remained jittery, the public sensed a diminution of actual danger. As early as February 25, crowds at the Capitol had begun to dwindle, although that was the day Old Thad dramatically presented the impeachment resolutions to the Senate. By the close of the week,

[76] Welles, *Diary*, III, 297; Russ, "Was There Danger of a Second Civil War during Reconstruction?" *loc. cit.*, 47; Logan, "The Loyal G.A.R.," *loc. cit.*

[77] Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 27, 28, 1868; New York *World*, February 27, 28, 1868.

[78] New York *Herald*, February 28, 1868; New York *World*, February 28, 29, March 2, 1868; Cincinnati *Gazette*, March 2, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 297.

the chief interest for New Yorkers was the fire in Barnum's menagerie. One paper remarked, "Men glance at the Washington dispatches . . . and then go about their business just as though there was nothing wrong anywhere. It was not so a week ago, but sensations do not last long in New York." To the American people it now seemed clear that the issue had resolved itself into a legal struggle in which lawyers would be the most belligerent contestants.[79]

The G.A.R. continued to breathe fire throughout the impeachment trial, and Democratic papers eagerly capitalized on this additional evidence of the society's partisanship. The Washington *National Intelligencer* declared in disdain that Radicals were "holding it up as a scarecrow to frighten the government and the people from a defense of their Constitutional and republican institutions." Other papers, however, expressed alarm. One editorial on the Grand Army warned: ". . . we are undoubtedly on the brink of a military despotism," while another paper declared the society to be the "most dangerous enemy of our free institutions," commanded by "one of the most desperate and reckless soldier-politicians that the war has produced." It was the "armed force of the Radical party." That it was ready at any time to assist in overthrowing the government was clear "from the alacrity with which the subordinate commanders tendered the services of their commands to General Logan." Still another paper, remarking that almost every country town had its G.A.R. post, warned that when Radicals were ready to declare the "Empire," they could strike as had Louis Napoleon, since the organization was so nicely distributed, so well drilled, and so thoroughly armed that "by a preconcerted signal they could, in one hour take possession of the entire country." [80]

But the danger of violence had passed, and Radicals made no further effort to prepare veterans for armed action. They had more

[79] St. Louis *Times*, February 25, March 8, 1868; New York *World*, February 26, 1868; New York *Times*, February 26, 1868; Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle*, February 27, 1868.

[80] W. O. Hanby to Washburne, March 7, 1868, Washburne MSS.; H. W. Slocum to Sherman, March 8, 1868, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Washington *National Intelligencer*, February 28, 1868; St. Louis *Times*, February 26, 1868; New York *Sunday News* quoted in New York *Soldier's Friend*, May, 1868; New York *Express* quoted *ibid.*; St. Louis *Times*, February 26, 1868.

peaceful work for the Grand Army and other veterans' societies. As the trial drew to a close and it became evident that the vote would be close, Radicals used official expressions of soldiers' meetings to influence the public as well as wavering senators. A Wisconsin editor suggested to Governor Fairchild that a veterans' convention pass "strong and ringing resolutions expressive of the loyal people of Wisconsin as to the necessity and justice of impeachment." These resolutions must be carefully worded, the editor warned, to indicate that the veterans really believed Johnson guilty and demanded his removal "for no partisan purpose." [81]

Veterans' groups willingly complied with Radical requests. The Wisconsin soldiers' convention demanded that those senators unable to "ratify the verdict of the people" by voting for conviction "render back to their constituency the power delegated to them." In Philadelphia, General J. T. Owen, national G.A.R. vice-commander, told a soldiers' meeting that certain perfidious senators were "going back" on their original position. The horrified veterans announced to the world that Senators J. W. Grimes, W. P. Fessenden, and Lyman Trumbull were conspiring to "place the government which we have saved from her armed foes absolutely in control of her rebel enemies." If impeachment failed, it was not through lack of effort on the part of Grand Army leaders to prevent Johnson's acquittal.[82]

[81] Horace Rublee to Fairchild, May 12, 1868, Fairchild MSS.
[82] New York *Tribune*, May 14, 18, 1868.

CHAPTER FIVE

Veterans and the Election of 1868

THE POLITICIANS OF 1868 were well aware of the uniform's power over the popular imagination: the practice of nominating a successful military man to strengthen a presidential ticket is as old as the presidency. When Democrats resorted to this device in 1864, however, a new factor entered the situation; they hoped not only that General McClellan would have a special appeal for the civilian public, but also that he would win the soldier vote for his party. Four years later the veterans were still an important factor in party calculations. A Democrat wrote, "We must receive a large proportion of that vote in the coming contest or we are defeated," while a Republican declared: ". . . the *Soldiers hold* the balance of power and *will* make the next *President*. . . ." Leaders in both parties urged the selection of an outstanding soldier as lure for the veterans' vote.[1]

Moreover a colorful military candidate would draw attention from Reconstruction and financial issues, on which neither party could present a united front. One Republican, convinced that people were turning to the Democrats for "relief from the present financial pressure," concluded that only with Grant could his party cloud the war-bond question. He commented, "Only Grant can beat this issue. If we run Grant, we can generally count upon the soldier vote—they will vote for him to glorify themselves—feeling that to place him in the Presidential office will be an additional recognition of their own services . . . that is to say they will prefer glory to repudiation." [2]

[1] R. J. Walker to Samuel J. Tilden, May 30, 1868, in John Bigelow (ed.), *Letters and Literary Memorials of Samuel Jones Tilden* (New York, 1908), 2 vols., I, 233; Camp to Washburne, January 27, 1867, Washburne MSS.

[2] M. B. Brown to Washburne, December 9, 1867, Washburne MSS.

When Republicans finally won Grant, they turned to the task of organizing the soldiers in his support. The Radical veterans' political convention of 1866 having proved to be a great success, the party planned a similar device for the presidential campaign. Arrangements for this gathering could most easily have been made through the widespread G.A.R., but such action would have produced another avalanche of Democratic charges that the society was partisan and dangerous. The resolutions of a Washington, D.C., post, urging a veterans' nominating convention, drew a rebuke even from the Republican Chicago *Tribune*.[3] Organizers concluded that it would be best to develop the movement outside the G.A.R.

Accordingly a group of Radical soldiers, meeting in Washington on December 18, 1867, voted to invite prominent soldiers to call together a national veterans' convention in May "for the consideration of national questions, and the nomination of candidates." On the assembly's executive committee were such prominent Grand Army members as Butler, Chipman, and John M. Palmer. It was a foregone conclusion that the convention would promote Grant's political fortunes; in January the national G.A.R. encampment expressed approval for the proposed assembly in the same breath that it urged the general for president. A member of the national committee wrote that the gathering would "of course" recommend Grant, and that he would "keep an eye out for Butler, Banks, and the other hostile brethren. . . . If they want a fight with Grant's friends they can have it and odds given them." [4]

While state mass-meetings chose delegates amid shouts for Grant, the executive committee issued a preconvention address that sounded the note to be echoed throughout the campaign. "Opposed to you are arrayed the late Confederate army of the South, and their more treacherous allies, the Copperheads of the

[3] Chicago *Tribune*, January 7, 1868.

[4] Printed circular letter, signed by Brig. Gen. T. T. Crittenden, and Will A. Short, to Fairchild, December 18, 1867, Fairchild MSS.; call, February 1, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, April, 1868; *ibid.*, May, 1868; Wilson, *Life of John A. Rawlins*, 348; Philadelphia *Press*, January 17, 1868; James Brisbin to Washburne, February 10, 1868, Washburne MSS.; Schurz to his wife, April 14, 1868, in Schafer (ed.), *Intimate Letters of Carl Schurz*, 433; St. Joseph (Mo.) *Herald*, January 10, 14, 1868.

North. . . . But yesterday they were using the bullet to overthrow the government, to-day they are using the ballot to control it." In many cases Grand Army officials played prominent roles in the state assemblies.[5]

Simultaneously with the meeting of the regular Republican convention at Chicago, the soldier-delegates gathered amid tremendous enthusiasm. With much band blaring and flag waving, with cheers for Grant and groans for Johnson, the delegates marched the streets and then settled down to applaud the harangues of such political generals as Logan, Fairchild, Sickles, Hawley, and John Cochrane. The assembly chose Fairchild chairman when Logan declined because of duties in the regular convention. An observer commented, "It was impossible not to perceive a theatrical element in the entrance, after the proceedings had commenced, of General Sickles, leaning on crutches and supported from behind, and in the selection of a one-armed officer, Governor Fairchild . . . to preside. . . ." [6]

The leaders spat their venom at Johnson and the "recreant seven" who had voted for his acquittal, and strained logic in their arguments for the Radical Reconstruction policy. One of them shouted that Negroes had proved themselves capable of using the ballot, "for they had cast it always for the Republican party." The managers, neglecting nothing, had brought Grant's father to Chicago; and when Chairman Fairchild announced his presence, the entire audience arose to cheer him. As the band pounded "Hail Columbia," he took his seat beside the chairman and finally responded to cries for a speech. Adjusting his spectacles, the old man expressed astonishment that the nation's braves should call upon him, who had done nothing for the country. "You had a son, that's enough!" was the shouted response.[7]

The convention's resolutions proclaimed Grant the soldiers' choice for President. Further, they declared Johnson guilty of

[5] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, May 9, 19, 1868; Cincinnati *Gazette*, May 20, 1868; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 13, 14, 15, 1868.

[6] Philadelphia *Press*, May 20, 1868; Charles Fairchild to his sister, May 19, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; Cincinnati *Gazette*, May 21, 1868; Adams Sherman Hill, "The Chicago Convention," in *North American Review* (Boston, 1815–1940), CVII (July, 1868), 171.

[7] New York *Tribune*, May 20, 1868; Utica *Daily Observer*, May 20, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, May 20, 1868.

high crimes and misdemeanors and condemned every senator who had voted for his acquittal. Not forgetting themselves, the veterans asserted that the national and state governments should bestow on soldiers "all the offices of manual or clerical labor in the various departments." [8]

The scene shifted to the regular convention, where a misguided delegate almost frustrated the purpose of the veterans' assembly by nominating Grant. He was compelled to withdraw his nomination "at the instance of the whole Convention." A committee of one hundred from the soldiers' gathering, headed by Fairchild, arrived with their request for Grant's nomination and "marched into the opera house and delivered it amid the cheers of the thousands there assembled." Two days later the convention nominated the general without a dissenting voice, and gave second place to Schuyler Colfax, who had strengthened himself with soldiers the previous year by delivering lectures to benefit G.A.R. post charity funds. The platform enthusiastically declared that no one was more entitled to honor than the veteran: "The bounties and pensions appropriated by law . . . are obligations never to be forgotten. The widows and orphans . . . are wards of the people —a sacred legacy. . . ." [9]

While Republicans regarded their soldier side show as a great triumph, more critical observers found it "a convention of old case-hardened politicians." One onlooker complained that the soldiers' wishes "found no more distinct . . . expression in this assemblage of officers—scarcely any privates were present—than in the National Convention to which it was a tender." [10]

Despite the scorn of Democrats for the Radical veterans' convention, they decided to counter it with similar demonstrations. But they were not so fortunate as their opponents, for unity was lacking on the subject of candidates as well as on economic ques-

[8] "Platform and Principles adopted by the Soldiers' and Sailors' National Convention," May 19, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend*, June, October, 1868; "General Grant's Reply to the Soldiers," *ibid.*, October 3, 1868.

[9] New York *Tribune*, May 20, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, May 21, 22, 1868; Fairchild to his sister, May 23, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; Indianapolis *Journal*, October 28, 31, November 4, 1867; Ovando J. Hollister, *Life of Schuyler Colfax* (New York, 1886), 314; Hill, "Chicago Convention," *loc. cit.*, 171.

[10] New York *Herald* quoted in New York *Soldier's Friend*, June, 1868; Hill, "Chicago Convention," *loc. cit.*, 171.

tions. "The Democratic party is in an awkward position," remarked one paper; "in their recommendations the central committees and prominent leaders [of] no two States agree." While the peace faction opposed any military candidate, War Democrats urged a soldier-leader and, deprived of Grant, disagreed on other possibilities. Some spoke of Sherman, who steadily refused to become involved in politics. Others favored McClellan; but from Europe he opposed their promotion, and discussion of him gradually dwindled. The New York *Herald* came out for David Farragut, whom it believed to be "the only chance of a Democratic compromise upon epaulettes." General Francis P. Blair also had determined champions.[11]

Winfield Scott Hancock seemed the most promising military man. Tall and handsome, he combined with an imposing appearance such admirable virtues as courage, patient industry, and high ideals. He lacked any spark of genius, but his keen judgment and valor at Gettysburg, contributing largely to Lee's defeat, brought him fame. Although known to be opposed to Radical ideas and reportedly related to McClellan, Hancock managed to escape the fate of Fitz-John Porter and other favorites of "Little Napoleon." When Johnson sent Hancock to replace Sheridan as commander of Louisiana and Texas, the general's deference to civil law endeared him to conservatives but irritated Radicals. The latter had made some effort to win him, but by 1868 they recognized him as a possible Democratic candidate. Hancock's differences with Grant, culminating in his request for release from New Orleans, further affronted the Radicals; they derided Johnson's suggestion that Congress tender the general a vote of thanks for his administration.[12]

[11] New York *Citizen*, April 25, 1868; Prime to McClellan, December 18, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVI; McClellan to S. L. M. Barlow, March 13, 1868, *ibid.*, 1st Ser., XCII (McClellan dated this letter 1865, but it seems obvious that it was written in 1868); New York *Herald*, May 1, 1868.

[12] *Dictionary of American Biography*, VIII, 221; *Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper*, October 14, 1865; Dana, *Recollections of the Civil War*, 190; Welles, *Diary*, III, 241, 242, 277, 298; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, January 27, February 29, March 3, 7, 10, 11, 14, July 13, 1868; New York *Tribune*, September 24, 1867; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, September 26, 28, December 7, 19, 20, 1867, February 21, 1868; Washington *Daily Chronicle*, February 29, 1868; Almira Russell Hancock, *Reminiscences of Winfield Scott Hancock* (New York, 1887), 127–32.

Hancock's policy brought him considerable popularity among grateful southerners, however. This fact, as well as the desire to win the soldier vote, led several influential Democrats to advocate his candidacy. When Samuel Tilden, chairman of the New York committee, consulted R. J. Walker's views, the latter replied that Hancock was the only Democrat who could "certainly be elected." He was the most acceptable military candidate to the South; only he could carry Pennsylvania; and only he could challenge Grant for the soldiers' vote. At the same time the Blairs insisted that a winning candidate must have an unassailable war record in order to draw a large part of the veterans' vote, but he must also be acceptable to the South. Frank Blair believed Hancock stronger than Grant and asserted that if "compelled to work for somebody else" he would support the "Superb." The New York *Tribune* reported that at a political conference Johnson advocated Hancock and everyone agreed that "he was the only man who could make a show against Grant." [13]

But a number of civilians, led by George Hunt Pendleton, Thomas A. Hendricks, and Salmon P. Chase, also enjoyed strong support. So many were in the field that leaders of veterans could make no pledge in advance; they could only hope that their convention would assist in the nomination of a soldier, preferably Hancock. When the national Democratic executive committee gathered at Washington in February to discuss their presidential convention, the committee appointed by the conservative veterans' convention of 1866 also met. This group resolved that soldiers should gather simultaneously with the regular convention. The press announced that the assembly's purpose would be to "harmonize with the Democratic convention if acceptable candidates are put forward." [14]

The soldier-politicians now made strenuous efforts to win

[13] Clemenceau, *American Reconstruction*, 139; Walker to Tilden, May 30, 1868, in Bigelow (ed.), *Letters of Samuel Jones Tilden*, I, 233; Alexander Clarence Flick, *Samuel Jones Tilden, a Study in Political Sagacity* (New York, 1939), 174; Smith, *The Blair Family in Politics*, II, 391, 392; New York *Tribune*, December 7, 1867; Welles, *Diary*, III, 295.

[14] Washington *National Intelligencer*, February 24, 1868; Washington *Evening Star*, February 22, 1868; Utica *Daily Observer*, February 25, 1868; *Union White Boys in Blue, Constitution and Proceedings of Soldiers' and Sailors' Convention at Indianapolis* (pamphlet, Indianapolis, 1868), Library of Congress.

united support for Hancock, but they made little headway against the opposition of former Peace Democrats to any soldier. The New York *Herald* commented: ". . . the Western Copperheads will not support Hancock. They will not play second fiddle to Grant." To overcome such prejudice, Charles G. Halpine, leader in the Democratic veterans' movement, waged an aggressive campaign in his New York *Citizen*. He pointed out that while War Democrats might easily be repelled, Copperheads had no means of escape: ". . . the vote for Hancock or Farragut may be like the discomforts of the frying pan, but the success of General Grant is the fire itself." [15]

In April the veterans' committee, determined to nullify the Grand Army's influence on soldiers, again assembled and discussed means of accomplishing Hancock's nomination. It appointed a committee under General James B. Steedman, which journeyed to Albany and Utica for consultations with former Governor Seymour and other politicians. Halpine remarked regarding the committee's efforts, "It would be premature at present to state . . . with whom they are consulting, or what the prospects thus far, of their finding acceptance for their views. This fact, however, must be obvious—that if our Democratic managers desire to counteract the influence . . . of the Grand Army of the Republic, under its commanders Logan and Sickles, they can by no means afford to neglect or overlook the vast conservative ex-military element. . . ." [16]

Through the spring Democratic veterans' leaders continued to urge Hancock, but the Peace faction remained unmoved by Halpine's arguments as well as by the New York *World*'s assurance that the entire influence of the administration would support the general as candidate. And even those who favored a military nominee were still divided. The *World* reported that Hancock was strong only in the East and the South; in the West, McClellan was the most popular military figure.[17]

[15] New York *Herald*, May 1, 1868; New York *Citizen*, January 18, 1868.

[16] New York *Citizen*, May 2, 7, 1868; Utica *Daily Observer*, April 29, May 7, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, April 30, May 1, 1868.

[17] New York *Citizen*, May 23, 1868; New York *World*, June 1, 8, 1868; A. T. Aukency to Jeremiah S. Black, June 18, 1868, Jeremiah S. Black MSS. (1850–89) in Library of Congress; M. T. McMahon to McClellan, May 22, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVI.

Democratic leaders, worried over the seemingly hopeless division in opinion, would not countenance added confusion from the military element. S. E. Church asked Samuel Tilden about the proposed soldiers' convention: "In whose interest is this military representation called? With such a body in session asking for a military man, can you refuse putting one on, either at the head or the tail of the ticket? . . . If it is gone into we had better direct it. Please give this attention." Influenced by such fretting or by the seeming impossibility of gaining unanimity for Hancock, the soldier-politicians retreated from their position. Halpine admitted in the *Citizen* that the veterans would support any loyal Democrat if Hancock did not win and suggested that they might accept Chase. His final position was, "We are for Chase if we can get him; for Hancock if he can be nominated. . . ." [18]

But on one point Halpine was firm: the assembly could not support any candidate who had opposed the war, nor any platform that ignored the "issues of national policy which were settled by that tribunal of battle. . . ." Given a loyal candidate, soldier or citizen, Democratic soldiers would "turn the flank of Grant's military prestige." [19]

As the convention date approached and opinion remained divided, it became clear that the veterans' gathering could make no such demand for a candidate as had Radical soldiers. Although Republicans insisted that the purpose of the veterans' assembly was to force Hancock upon the regular convention, the call announced that the delegates would "advise and cooperate with the Democratic party." But it urged the selection of a military or loyal-civilian candidate in order to prevent Republicans from winning the election by associating Democrats with opposition to the war: ". . . the momentous issues between the two parties will then be fairly considered, and the reason, not the prejudice of the people will determine their choice." [20]

On the eve of the convention, veterans' leaders made one last

[18] S. E. Church to Tilden, June 10, 1868, in Bigelow (ed.), *Letters of Samuel Jones Tilden*, I, 228; New York *Citizen*, May 30, June 13, 20, 1868.

[19] New York *Citizen*, June 13, 20, 1868.

[20] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 7, 1868; call for Soldiers' National Convention, signed by National Executive Committee, Washington, June 4, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 27, 1868; New York *Tribune*, June 20, 1868.

frantic effort to get a soldier-candidate. Halpine, as spokesman for the "special committee" of the soldiers' assembly, wrote General Sherman "in strict confidence" that after consulting a majority of the leading soldiers he was convinced that both conventions, if assured that Sherman would not decline, would choose him almost unanimously. Only the conviction—created by the Republican press—that he would refuse had prevented the "universal adoption" of his name. Halpine promised that if the general would assent, the platform would accept "all the issues of the war as settled." As might have been expected, Sherman refused; only a few months earlier he had told his wife, "I am determined not to be drawn into politics let what may follow. . . ." Veterans' leaders could only hope that Hancock's popularity would overcome the objections of the Peace faction.[21]

Hancock, indeed, seemed to have a fair chance, and he himself confidently expected the nomination. McClellan had written that he favored the general, while an increasing number of politicians believed that their only hope lay in the choice of a War Democrat who could split the soldiers' vote. Welles remarked: ". . . he has a good military record, and the military feeling is prevailing at this time. . . . Hancock, if the candidate, will be elected." Another wrote that volunteers numbered "more than one half the vote of the North at present. We must divide this vote or we are lost. Hancock can get a *majority* of this vote." The general opposed his party's Greenback faction, and his champions emphasized his appeal for those who, favoring payment of national bonds in gold, would be repulsed by Pendleton. Moreover, Hancock's support from the southern press remained steady. But his advocates feared the opposition of the former Peace men as well as the objection that the general's supervision of the trial and execution of Mrs. Mary Suratt would make dangerous campaign ammunition. More important, they could not take an official statement of veterans' support into the regular convention. A few of the delegates were determined to press General Blair.[22]

[21] C. G. Halpine to Sherman, June 23, 1868, W. T. Sherman MSS.; J. H. Van Allen to *id.*, May 13, 1868, *ibid.;* S. S. Hays to *id.*, June 23, 1868, *ibid.;* W. T. Sherman to his wife, September 13, 1867, in Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of Sherman*, 359.

[22] New York *Citizen*, July 4, 1868; Stewart Van Vliet to Sherman, May 29,

The convention, in a continuous uproar, was "perhaps the most turbulent assembly ever known in this country." Temporary Chairman John B. McClernand was completely unable to quiet the five hundred unruly delegates; leaders achieved a degree of order only by appointing a sergeant at arms for each delegation. The assembly reflected the party's division on economic policy when the delegates disagreed over General Thomas Ewing's suggestion that the veterans advocate acceptance of legal-tender notes for bonds. The proposal was defeated.[23]

Turning to the problem of candidates, leaders bowed to circumstances and planned to block any nomination. They found it difficult, however, to restrain the delegates, who expected to make a military nomination and showed a definite preference for Hancock. Unable to check resolutions for the general, leaders pushed through a rule providing that all motions regarding nominations be referred without debate to a committee. Delegates continued to present the general's name, but their nominations went immediately to the committee, which promptly discarded them. After conferring with the corresponding committee of the regular convention, it concluded to present no resolutions. The New York *Tribune* scornfully remarked, "The Cooper Institute tender to the Tammany Hall locomotive is hugging the track as though it were on the verge of a precipice." [24]

Amid cheers Colonel O'Beirne, Johnson's investigator of the G.A.R., reported the assembly's address to the regular convention. This pronouncement charged that Republicans had denied official positions to hundreds of veterans. It announced that a half-million soldiers were Democrats and that another half-million who had supported the Republicans were ready to change. The address begged, however, and the regular convention received with "loud applause" the plea that "no devotion to men or

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1868, W. T. Sherman MSS.; McMahon to McClellan, May 22, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVI; New York *Tribune*, June 19, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 396, 398; Walker to R. W. Newton, July 6, 1868, Johnson MSS.; Coleman, *The Election of 1868*, 172, 174; New York *World*, June 29, 1868; Hancock, *Reminiscences of Hancock*, 108–10; Smith, *The Blair Family in Politics*, II, 404.

[23] Cincinnati *Gazette*, July 6, 1868; George B. Woods, "The New York Convention," in *North American Review*, CVIII (1869), 463; New York *World*, July 8, 1868.

[24] New York *Tribune*, July 7, 1868; New York *World*, June 23, July 3, 1868.

adherence to past issues would be permitted to endanger the success of the great party. . . ." The veterans pledged their support to the party's nominees and promised that they would induce their comrades to do so. This blanket approval had been pushed through with difficulty because many delegates feared that a Peace candidate might be chosen. General Slocum finally quieted their alarm with the assurance that the regular gathering would "adopt the principles sent them by this convention." [25]

The soldier-delegates, voting their confidence in McClellan, appointed a committee to urge him to participate in the campaign. They resolved also that a mass meeting of Union and Confederate soldiers be held at Washington. Their warm reception of several Confederate veteran–guests did not go unremarked by the Republican press.[26]

After a conference, the assembly's executive committee informed the Kansas and New England delegations to the regular convention that it unanimously chose Hancock as candidate. Should a civilian from the East be selected, however, "then our first choice for the second place . . . was General Ewing . . . and if from the West, then our choice would be General Franklin of Connecticut." [27]

In the regular convention, a strong movement developed for Hancock. After a poor showing on the first ballot his strength steadily increased. By July 8 he and Hendricks were tied for first place, and Hancock at one time received as many as 144½ votes. Some papers announced his nomination, and the cannon in front of the convention hall saluted his victory. Mounting enthusiasm for the general alarmed his opponents, and to stem it they moved an adjournment. This motion was at first defeated, but a majority agreed when an altercation in the Illinois delegation threatened to break into violence. The interruption was fatal to Hancock; during the night the intriguers deserted him. The next day Tammany politicians brought forth Horatio Seymour to break the

[25] New York *Tribune*, July 7, 1868; *Proceedings of the National Democratic Convention* (Boston, 1868), 37; Utica *Daily Observer*, July 8, 1868.

[26] New York *Tribune*, July 8, 1868; Utica *Daily Observer*, July 8, 1868; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July 18, August (monthly issue), 1868.

[27] Eli C. Kinsley to Gen. Charles W. Blair, July 8, 1868, in *Proceedings National Democratic Convention*, 1868, pp. 165, 166.

deadlock. Hancock and his followers blamed his defeat on Chairman Seymour, who forbade evening sessions. Had the convention continued balloting during the evenings of July 7 and 8, Hancock would probably have been nominated; it was the periods of recess that gave New Yorkers their opportunity for successful intrigue.[28]

After the nomination of the dark horse, Seymour, one paper reported a "general conviction" that the second place "must be assigned to a soldier." This was believed necessary in order to conciliate the War Democrats as well as to attract conservative Republicans and the veterans. Hancock, Thomas, Ewing, Blair, and Ohio's General George W. Morgan received consideration. Since New York had received the presidential nomination, Pennsylvania's Hancock was automatically eliminated. Ewing's champions presented the letters in his behalf from the veterans' executive committee, but southern delegations favored Blair because of his position that the carpetbag governments must be overthrown. The former Confederate who seconded his nomination assured the delegates that he had consulted a number of generals at the veterans' assembly and that they had agreed to support Blair. The convention, giving no heed to the voice of the soldiers' executive committee, accepted the statement of the outspoken general. The platform gave veterans recognition but made no promises for the future: it stated that they "must ever be gratefully remembered, and all the guarantees given in their favor must be faithfully carried into execution." [29]

Even Democrats admitted that Seymour and Blair were unwise selections. Seymour, leader of his party's bondholder faction, was little known outside New York. The charge that his behavior during the war fell short of being loyal was undoubtedly unjust, but his reputation as a Copperhead and the fact that he had been accused of disloyal language during the draft riots of 1863 gave Radicals fine campaign ammunition. Blair was an equally unfortunate choice; he produced no such warm enthusiasm among soldiers

[28] Woods, "The New York Convention," *loc. cit.*, 459, 460; New York *Tribune*, July 8, 9, 10, 30, 1868; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 29, 1868; Welles, *Diary*, III, 397, 400; Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, September 8, 1868; Hancock, *Reminiscences of Hancock*, 108.

[29] Utica *Daily Observer*, July 10, 1868; Clemenceau, *American Reconstruction*, 211; *Proceedings National Democratic Convention*, 1868, pp. 60, 165–66.

as did Hancock and McClellan. Moreover, his letter urging the "trampling into dust" of congressional Reconstruction gave credence to the Republican charge that he hoped to destroy the results of the war. Writers could present Blair to servicemen as the "servant of the 'lost cause,' " a man who would aid the South to "gain by the ballot what it lost by the bullet." The New York *Tribune* sympathized with veterans who had "expected mighty things for themselves from the conjunction of the National Democratic and soldiers and sailors convention. Such a remarkable pairing, we admit, ought to have produced more of a Mars than Mr. Blair." [30] Secretary Welles was disgusted:

> There should have been great care to avoid making a War issue, unless a War candidate like Hancock was selected, for therein is Grant's strength. With a military opponent Grant is formidable. The only hope of the Radicals was in an appeal to the prejudices on bygone questions of war, and the hatred which still lingers and is stimulated by them. With unaccountable stupidity, the Democrats took precisely the course which the Radicals wished them to. They stifled the military and patriotic sentiment for Hancock, and brought forward a Peace Democrat, a man whom the soldiers throughout the land disliked. . . .[31]

As Welles feared, the Democratic choice put an already discredited party in the worst possible position for campaigning. With Johnson or Hancock, it might have made Reconstruction the issue, or, accepting Reconstruction as an accomplished fact, it could have argued for state rights under Chase. With Pendleton, the party might have forced a decision on the financial issue. But Democrats straddled this issue by recognizing one view in its platform and the other in its candidate. And Radicals could wave the bloody shirt against a Peace Democrat, exhorting soldiers to "vote as they shot." A conservative's campaign complaint ran, "Hatred of the Rebels, revenge, the evils of reconstruction . . . this is the stuff of which every Radical oration is made. . . . No

[30] Alexander James Wall, *Sketch of the Life of Horatio Seymour . . . Governor of the State of New York . . .* (New York, 1929), 24–26; Randall, *Lincoln*, II, 295–96; Welles, *Diary*, III, 396, 398; New York *Tribune*, July 13, 1868; New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 1, 1868; New York *World*, July 25, 1868.

[31] Welles, *Diary*, III, 456.

allusion to the really great questions before the country. . . ." [32]

The effect of the nomination on volunteers was indicated by the resentment of Democratic veterans' clubs. The New York executive committee, representing 2,300 members, expressed approval of Blair but openly condemned the party's choice for first place. The president of a New York society begged Johnson's consent to a movement to nominate him or Chase, with Hancock, John A. Dix, or Ewing for second place: "If something is not done at once, the Soldiers and sailors will suport [*sic*] that Traitor Grant." [33]

The first Republican reaction to the nomination was one of relief. Carl Schurz had written, "If an extreme Copperhead is chosen the game will be easy for us. But if a man like General Hancock shall be nominated we shall have to work very hard." Against such a candidate as Seymour, Republicans believed with the New York *Tribune* that Grant would "make nearly a clean sweep of the Union's defenders." [34]

Most of them were too confident to heed the assertion of a few politicians that further bounty legislation was "a political necessity." Congress gave only brief consideration to the measures that were introduced. On July 3 the House passed a bill to liberalize bounties, but it did not come to a vote in the Senate. Republicans expected to rely entirely upon Grant's popularity and upon campaign organizations to hold the veterans.[35]

The New York *Tribune* pointed out that the use of soldiers in the campaign might make an important contribution to victory: "Far more than the strength which was given to the Republican cause by the organization and turn-out of the Wide-Awakes in 1856–60 would now be derived from the introduction into the

[32] Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant, Politician*, 123; Welles, *Diary*, III, 445.

[33] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, July 13, 1868; Liebeman to Johnson, July 13, 1868, Johnson MSS.

[34] New York *World*, July 25, 1868; Schurz to his wife, May 24, 1868, in Schafer (ed.), *Intimate Letters of Carl Schurz*, 438; New York *Tribune*, May 22, 1868.

[35] W. H. Odlin to Washburne, February 26, 1868, Washburne MSS.; B. F. Potts to Garfield, June 3, 1868, Garfield MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, June 20, 1868, Garfield Letter Books (1852–81), Library of Congress; *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 2 Sess., January 6–7, 21, February 17, 21, March 10–June 8, 1868, pp. 336, 341–42, 346, 358–59, 650, 1210, 1319, 1787, 1789, 1812, 1886, 1940, 2022, 2026, 2633, 2936, 3722; New York *Herald*, February 29, 1868; New York *Tribune*, February 16, March 12, 1867.

present campaign of grand processions of the Veterans of the war of the Union, reassembling clothed in the faded and worn army blue under the torn and tattered ensigns which they bore through the battle's blast." [36]

Republicans, long aware of this possibility, planned to improve the technique of the 1866 campaign. They needed an efficient, firmly controlled organization extending into every community; and the G.A.R., with its hierarchy of national offices, state departments, and local posts, would have been ideally suited to their purpose. But the decision to check the society's open participation in politics forced the soldier-politicians to build anew. Early in 1867, the national committee appointed by the 1866 Radical veterans' convention met to plan a society which would become "a powerful auxiliary in the Presidential contest." In March this committee's chairman and secretary, H. A. Barnum and L. Edwin Dudley, inquired of "all loyal veteran organizations throughout the country" their strength and willingness to place themselves "under one harmonious plan with State and National heads or councils." Two months later the committee announced its representatives, some of them G.A.R. officials, in twenty-seven states.[37]

The Republican veterans' convention in Chicago, providing for the organization's administration, gave the work impetus. At a meeting late in June, 1868, a subcommittee was formed and a "central committee" established in each state. The officers decided that all clubs under their auspices would be called Boys in Blue and informed the Republican executive committee that they were completing organization throughout the country. The ubiquitous Chipman, still national G.A.R. adjutant general, acted as secretary. The committee met at Philadelphia to "arrange the details for a grand forward movement upon the enemies [*sic*] works." [38]

[36] New York *Tribune*, June 9, 1868.

[37] Washington *Great Republic*, March 7, 21, 1867; circular letter, Barnum and Dudley, Veteran National Committee, Washington, to "Comrade," March 27, 1867, *ibid.*, March 28, 1867; *id.* to Butler, April 5, 1867, Butler MSS.; Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, March 30, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, May 1, 1867, May (monthly issue), 1867.

[38] New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 28, 1868, July (monthly issue), 1868; New York *Tribune*, June 29, 1868; Short to W. E. Chandler, July 7, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS. (1862–1901), Library of Congress.

When the acting secretary complained to the Republican national committee that "thus far we have proceeded without funds," that committee voted $2,000 to the soldiers' organization. The veterans' council arranged with Editor William Oland Bourne of the *Soldier's Friend* for posters and tracts to be distributed among the soldiers, and Bourne obligingly offered to furnish his paper, filled with Republican propaganda, for three months at cost: ". . . as it has a circulation of 50,000 and stands very high among the Soldiers," the committee's assistant secretary informed the national Republican committee, "your committee could not spend funds to a better purpose than the distribution of 500 per week by our committee." [39]

From its Washington headquarters, the subcommittee directed the active work of organization. "We are daily receiving the most cheering reports from the States," wrote the assistant secretary. "The veterans are becoming interested, and are manifesting a considerable spirit and enthusiasm, and they bid fair to do their share of work in the Campaign." Chipman wrote in August, "We are planning a series of mass conventions of the soldiers and sailors." These were staged throughout the country, and on each occasion thousands of "Fighting Boys in Blue" invaded the chosen city to impress the populace with their shouts for Grant as well as for the local Republican candidates.[40]

The state committees were equally active, and clubs sprang up everywhere to give color to Republican demonstrations. The Pennsylvania chairman wrote: ". . . I have perfected the machinery of a most thorough organization of the Soldiers of this State. I do not think it can be improved." The New York committee announced, "We are organized with State, county and district committees. . . . In every election district, town or ward in the State, we shall establish a company of 'Grant and Colfax

[39] Minutes of meeting of Republican executive committee, St. Nicholas Hotel, New York City, July 9, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; James T. Smith to Chandler, August 4, 1868, *ibid.;* Short to *id.*, July 27, 1868, *ibid.;* N. P. Chipman to Chandler, September 19, 1868, *ibid.;* John W. Forney to *id.*, September 28, 1868, *ibid.*

[40] New York *Soldier's Friend*, July 11, August (monthly edition), 1868; Short to Chandler, July 27, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; N. P. Chipman to *id.*, August 13, 1868, *ibid.;* Cincinnati *Daily Gazette*, July 18, 31, August 13, 24, September 2, 8, 18, 22, 25, October 3, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, September 3, 4, October 5, 1868.

Boys in Blue,' organized like a company of infantry." When the national officers found themselves pressed for funds, the state councils turned to other sources for money. The New Jersey Republican committee gave its veterans' organization $2,000 for the campaign, and other state committees also "helped liberally." [41]

For several reasons the organizers gave particular attention to soldiers in the District of Columbia, where the local council had formed twenty-two clubs. A leader, pointing out that many of the colored members were natives of the defeated states, commented: ". . . if several thousand of them can be organized into one enthusiastic body, the influence can be very great and happy upon their brothers in the south with whom they have efficient communication." The organizers also wished to influence the "10,000 voters employed here by the gov't," many of whom returned home to vote. The district committee planned an impressive demonstration to welcome Grant on his return to Washington. Chipman commented, "5,000 torches carried by 5,000 of his veteran soldiers joined by as many more in other organizations would be felt elsewhere." [42]

This national veterans' organization, colorfully uniformed, gave the political struggle a military atmosphere different from that of any previous presidential campaign. Following G.A.R. precedents, it used military terms and issued orders in military form. A report circulated by the marshal of the fifth district, New York City, illustrates the degree to which discipline was carried. Urging upon the various assembly districts the necessity for weekly meetings, he pointed out that the society's organization was like that of the army: "That conduct and military discipline should follow us now. . . ." The New York state committee issued an "order of battle" dictating procedure on election day. "Commanders of

[41] Charles H. T. Collis to Chandler, July 31, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; Chipman to *id.*, September 19, 1868, *ibid.;* Carl Damm to *id.*, June 5, 1868, *ibid.;* *id.* to Washburne, June 13, 1868, Washburne MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend,* August 15, 1868; H. A. Barnum to Fairchild, August 17, 1868, Fairchild MSS.

[42] S. R. Harrington to Veterans' National Executive Committee, August 30, 1868, Chandler MSS.; Chipman to National Republican Executive Committee, September 7, 1868, *ibid.*

forces will form line of battle on the morning of November third at daylight," it announced. "Every man will be prepared with one day's cooked rations and 40 pounds of ammunition. The rising of the sun will be the signal for attack along the whole line. . . ." [43]

Propaganda addressed to veterans struck an equally martial note. Assuring them that the campaign was but another battle in the war to save the Union, the national committee begged, "Fall in! . . . Soldiers, it is the old cause, and the hosts are again gathering for the conflict. . . . Grant again heads the column." State committees were no less eager to reawaken wartime feelings. The New York council cried that against the spirit of the rebellion, soldiers "must . . . march forward in this great political contest shoulder to shoulder," while New Jersey leaders declared, "Organize, then, soldiers, for another, and as we trust, last campaign against the Copperheads and Rebels. All up and down the lines the drums now beat. . . . Then fall into line, men, and once more onward to victory." The Michigan council begged soldiers to "rally once more under the old flag, around your old leader"; that of Wisconsin warned them to march behind Grant lest the " 'lost cause' with its train of war and sufferings" be revived. Pennsylvania's headquarters asserted the readiness of the state's warriors not only to vote the Republican ticket but also to march again "to our government's defense." Campaign songs for Boys in Blue contained the same persuasive arguments as did the addresses. In one of them the Boys sang, "Come on, Boys in Blue! he has led us before, . . . As we followed him then, we will follow once more. . . ." This song grew more martial in subsequent stanzas:

> We will vote as we battled in many a fight,
> For God and the Union, for Freedom and Right.
> Let our ballots secure what our bullets have won—
> Grant and Colfax will see that the work is well done.
>
> . . . . . .

[43] William M. Wirmerskirch to "various assembly districts," September 24, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, October 3, 1868; "Order of Battle," Headquarters Veteran Army Boys in Blue, State of New York, October 28, 1868, *ibid.*, November 7, 1868.

We whipped them before, we can whip them again;
We'll wipe treason out as we wiped slavery's stain;
For traitors and slaves we've no place in our land—
As true, loyal men to our colors we stand.[44]

The Boys in Blue clubs became a veritable army as the campaign progressed. The Pennsylvania committee believed soldiers to be so thoroughly organized that few remained for the Democrats. "Our camps extend . . . from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and there is not a veteran who does not realize that the public danger may once more call him to the field." Brilliantly uniformed in red, white, and blue, the soldiers marched in parades and torchlight processions, shouted at mass meetings, met and escorted political speakers, and added enthusiasm to rallies. The New York *Tribune* boasted, "Over 500,000 Veteran Boys in Blue, clad in Grant and Colfax caps and capes, are nightly swinging their lanterns and rending the sky with cheers for their old leader." The organization might become the mainspring of victory, for "every village and town" seemed to have "its Grant and Colfax Guard." [45]

The *Soldier's Friend* added its powerful appeal to these activities. "Which party stood by the soldiers when they were at the front?" it demanded, and continued: ". . . you may ratify by your ballots the principles . . . which you have manifested by your bullets." The attempt to attract veterans with Blair, the paper prophesied, would fail miserably. The nation's saviors could never support one who "boldly proclaims the most revolutionary

[44] Address of National Republican Soldiers and Sailors Executive Committee to Boys in Blue, August 1, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 22, 1868; address of New York Boys in Blue Committee to "Comrades," undated, *ibid.*, July 11, 1868; *id.* to *id.*, *ibid.*, August 15, 1868; Sickles to J. O. Johnson, August 27, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; address of New Jersey Boys in Blue Committee to "Comrades," undated, in New York *Tribune*, August 15, 1868; address of R. A. Alger to "Union Soldiers and Sailors of Michigan," August 17, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 12, 1868; address of Wisconsin Central Committee of Soldiers and Sailors [Boys in Blue] to "Comrades of the Army and Navy," undated, in Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 12, 1868; address, Central Committee of Soldiers and Sailors, to "Comrades," July 6, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 8, 1868; address of Connecticut Boys in Blue State Committee to "the young Republicans of Connecticut," undated, *ibid.*, September 5, 1868; *ibid.*, June 27, August 1, 15, September 19, 26, October 3, 24, November 7, December 5, 19, 1868; New York *Tribune*, May 18, August 8, 1868; Barnum to Fairchild, August 17, 1868, Fairchild MSS.

[45] New York *Tribune*, July 6, October 6, 1868; announcement by W. A. Short, New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 5, 1868; *ibid.*, September 4, 1868.

doctrines, and who translates into the phraseology of the present campaign the bloody threats of Wise, Yancey, Cobb. . . ." Begging soldiers to "remember Lincoln," the paper urged them to organize in every locality.[46]

The Republican press, echoing these arguments, proclaimed to veterans that Seymour had vetoed the New York army-suffrage bill and that he had opposed the war. If volunteers needed further prodding, Thomas Nast was eager to supply it with cartoons showing Seymour friendly to the draft rioters while Grant issued "unconditional surrender" terms.[47]

Democratic journals, on the other hand, apparently suffered from timidity so far as veterans were concerned. They dared not praise Seymour, the Peace faction's favorite, and they failed to stress Blair's military service. The papers publicized Blair's statement that the Democrats did the fighting, because while they were in the field the Republicans carried Ohio; but the Cincinnati *Gazette* easily refuted this argument by pointing out that Ohio volunteers retained their suffrage despite Democratic opposition. While the party press pointed to Democratic veterans' demonstrations as evidence that not all soldiers supported Grant, the New York *World*, oppressed with the realization of Grant's popularity among veterans, sought to destroy his military reputation. In August it began a series of articles designed to prove that Grant could claim no soldier's support because his blundering methods had cost thousands of lives. Some effort was made to capitalize on the Republicans' failure to press a new bounty measure; the *World* pointed to "what the spendthrift Congress has not done for the 'poor soldier.' " But the point was not emphasized.[48]

Democratic efforts to organize volunteers followed the Republican pattern. The "White Boys in Blue" society was much like the Republican association, except that it was more loosely organized and controlled. In February, 1868, the committee appointed by the Democratic soldiers' convention of 1866 decided

[46] New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 1, June, August, September (monthly issues), September 5, 1868; W. A. Short to Chandler, July 27, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.

[47] Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, July 27, October 27, 1868; Albert Bigelow Paine, *Thomas Nast, his Period and his Pictures* (New York, 1904), 127.

[48] Cincinnati *Gazette*, October 9, 1868; New York *World*, August 7, 15, 1868.

to leave details of organization to the various states. From its New York City headquarters it sent circulars to prominent veterans announcing, "Organization only is needed to make our strength felt." The central committee exercised general rather than direct supervision over the state councils.[49]

Like the Republican clubs, the White Boys in Blue staged noisy rallies and torchlight processions. Probably the term "White" in the title carried a special significance, since the members marched under such banners as "White Supremacy" and "No Nigger Voting." Later in the campaign, Republican papers added an insinuating adjective to the title of their own veterans' organization. Probably they prefixed the word "fighting" to emphasize their charge that the "White Boys" included some who had never worn a uniform until they donned the white and blue of the campaign association. Democrats indignantly denied this accusation.[50]

Although the Democratic press failed to publicize the White Boys in Blue as Republicans did their own organization, the association developed rapidly. From Brooklyn a member wrote, "We are . . . completely organized in every Ward and representing over 9 thousand members." The New York *World* boasted: ". . . at least 40,000 have already enrolled themselves for service in the cause in Ohio." [51]

Democratic soldier-politicians, however, worked at a distinct disadvantage because they lacked a military personality upon which to center enthusiasm. McClellan was in Europe; Hancock, apparently sulking over his convention defeat, remained unmoved by appeals to lend a helping hand. Halpine's enthusiasm had been chilled by Seymour's nomination, and he ceased to encourage veterans' organization. Because of the soldiers' dislike for Seymour, the organizers emphasized principles rather than candidates. But when they learned that McClellan planned to return from Europe in September, their hopes rose. Here was the figure to arouse the soldiers if only he could be induced to co-operate.

[49] *Union White Boys in Blue*, 3, 10, 12.

[50] *Ibid.*, 3.

[51] Richard B. Leech to McClellan, September 30, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVI; Abraham Naar to McClellan, October 1, 1868, *ibid.*, XVII; Columbus (Ohio) *Crisis*, August 19, 1868; New York *World*, August 25, 1868; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, November 2, 1868.

The McClellan Legion, weakened by the development of the White Boys in Blue, took on new life. Springing to action in New York, it held rallies, torchlight processions, and mass meetings. Speakers at these demonstrations stated "positively" that upon his return the general would make addresses in several cities.[52]

Meanwhile the two parties focused their attention on doubtful Pennsylvania, in the traditional belief that "as Pennsylvania goes, so goes the Union." The state's vacillating voters had given the Democrats a narrow victory in 1867, and on them the parties marshaled their forces of veterans for the campaign's most heated battle. The Republicans' national veterans' committee decided that a soldiers' mass meeting in Philadelphia just before the election would have decisive influence. Chipman wrote, "I think the convention will place . . . Pennsylvania beyond doubt and save Ph[a] [*sic*] from the enemy. It will also have a great reflex influence in all the states as we hope to have delegates in large numbers from all and to follow up the impetus there given by rigorous effort." The call, issued on September 3 by Chipman and Barnum, invited all veterans' organizations and urged war governors as well as current Republican governors to attend.[53]

The organizers soon struck a serious obstacle: the Pennsylvania committee needed funds for preparations, which they estimated would cost from $12,000 to $15,000. The national veterans' council had none to spare; so after collecting $7,500 from Philadelphia Republicans, the soldier-leaders turned to the national Republican committee. But Secretary W. E. Chandler, who had authorized Chipman to incur $5,000 in expenses, seemed indisposed to make further concessions. The workers refused to be turned aside. "If the Ph[a] [*sic*] convention succeeds," wrote Chipman, "it will settle the rebels in that state. Gov. Geary was elected by the Pittsburg convention and we intend this shall influence more votes than that one did." The Pennsylvania chairman, reminding Chandler that the demonstration would be "*National* and not *Local*," an-

[52] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, October 17, 1868; New York *World*, August 25, September 2, 8, 15, 17, 24, 28, 1868.

[53] Read to Washburne, July 17, 1868, Washburne MSS.; Chipman to Chandler, August 25, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; New York *Tribune*, September 5, 17, 1868; John W. Geary to Fairchild, September 9, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; Barnum and Chipman to *id.*, September 11, 1868, *ibid.*; circular invitation signed by Barnum and Chipman, September 3, 1868, Zachariah Chandler MSS.

nounced: "Curtin says the meeting will do more to elect Grant than anything else. . . ." [54]

When Chandler suggested that Chipman's council provide part of the needed sum Chipman indignantly declared that the Republican committee underestimated the soldiers' importance. Without veterans' organizations, which had been maintained since the war, there would be "no respectable mass conventions anywhere." Moreover, the failure of the proposed Pennsylvania gathering would "throw a wet blanket" on the canvass in that state which could not "be *dried* before the election." Chipman did not know of "a single state North where the vote would not be shamefully democratic but for the soldier vote. The great states of N.Y. Pa. Ohio and Ind. are to be carried by the 'Boys in Blue' or not at all." [55]

Politicians hurriedly added urgent appeals to those of the council. Relenting under this pressure, the Republican committee granted $3,000 of the requested $5,000, and the grateful organizers continued their plans for a monster gathering. Confidently expecting at least fifty thousand servicemen, the committee arranged to use Philadelphia's Academy of Music as well as the Independence Hall building and square. From railroads it extracted a two-cents-per-mile fare with free return ticket. For a week the celebrated Thomas Nast worked diligently producing transparencies for the torchlight procession and half–life-sized caricatures for the dining hall. A favorite example was his "Blair on the War Path." John W. Forney believed that "a great effect will be produced by this military demonstration." [56]

Democrats watched these preparations with uneasiness but hoped that McClellan's return would neutralize their effect. One enthusiast believed that all Republican appeals to veterans would

[54] J. T. Owen and Collis to William Claflin, September 12, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; Chipman to Chandler, September 8, 1868, *ibid.;* Collis to *id.*, September 15, 1868, *ibid.;* Chipman to *id.*, September 19, 1868, *ibid.*

[55] Chipman to Chandler, September 19, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.

[56] John M. Thayer to Claflin, September 1, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; Logan to Republican National Executive Committee, September 19, 1868, *ibid.;* John W. Forney to J. A. Griswold, September 23, 1868, *ibid.;* Chipman to Chandler, September 26, 1868, *ibid.;* Forney to *id.*, September 28, 1868, *ibid.;* Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, September 3, 1868; Cincinnati *Gazette*, September 12, October 2, 1868.

be "counteracted by a visit of the General to some of the most prominent places." Organizers of veterans planned an impressive reception for McClellan in which forty thousand uniformed Legion members would participate. McClellan requested that these arrangements be halted, but a committee from the Legion's national headquarters met him at the boat and persuaded him to accept a veterans' torchlight procession. Then Democrats overwhelmed the general with appeals to appear in Pennsylvania. One wrote that his presence in Philadelphia during the Republican soldiers' convention would "carry ⅔ of them away," while another believed it would counteract "the Soldier furor in favor of Grant—and take that away—tell me what is *left?*" But McClellan, who had offered to support a Hancock ticket, steadily refused to help elect a Peace Democrat.[57]

On October 1 and 2, Philadelphia was "rainbow hued with bunting and ablaze with torches" for the long-heralded Republican rally. Every vacant room was taken, and the soldiers' free dining hall was packed from morning until night. The few stores that opened quickly closed; Philadelphia was on holiday. "Twenty-five thousand boys in blue," declared an editorial, "in a column five miles long, marched through the streets . . . in faithful service still of the cause for which . . . they faithfully fought." Georges Clemenceau, impressed with the procession's "unheard of length," noticed that the wagonloads of disabled soldiers and the group of former Andersonville prisoners were particularly effective in exciting the spectators' enthusiasm.[58]

Later, Chipman called upon the assembled warriors to vote for Grant, "in view . . . of . . . hostile preparations for a new rebellion," while General Burnside announced that Seymour was "as emphatically the leader of the new rebellion as Robert E. Lee was of the old." One speaker's question, "Shall these men of the

[57] R. F. Stevens to "Dr." [Marcy?], September 21, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser,. XXV; McClellan to Barlow, September 8, 1868, *ibid.*, 1st Ser., XCIII; A. Oakey Hall to "Dr. Marcy," September 29, 1868, *ibid.*, 2d Ser., XXVI; W. H. Miller to Gen. W. F. Smith, September 30, 1868, *ibid.;* Col. A. Kleine and others to McClellan, n.d., *ibid.*, XXVII; Naar to *id.*, October 1, 1868, *ibid.;* R. B. Leech to *id.*, September 30, 1868, *ibid.*, XXVI; W. B. Sipes to Gen. W. F. Smith, September 30, 1868, *ibid.;* New York *World,* September 28, 30, October 3, 1868.

[58] New York *Tribune,* October 3, 1868; Cincinnati *Gazette,* October 2, 1868; Clemenceau, *American Reconstruction,* 250.

North, headed by Horatio Seymour, who refused to work with us in the vineyard, partake of the rich fruit of our labor?" brought forth shouts of "No, no!" After dark the soldiers were kept amused with extravagant fireworks and with cannon that boomed through most of the night. Papers estimated that the demonstration must have cost the party at least $200,000. Apparently Chairman Chandler was impressed; the next time Chipman requested funds, he received a check immediately. Clemenceau was sure that the rally would turn the city Republican, while the New York *Tribune* boasted, "The scene will never be forgotten in Philadelphia, and it is impossible to calculate its effect on the coming election." But the Pennsylvania Democratic committee did some calculating of its own; it warned that the purpose of the convention was to "bring here persons from other places, falsely pretending to be soldiers, and to assess and vote them in this city." [59]

Seymour, alarmed, urged immediate steps to counteract "the effects of the soldiers' meeting," upon which Republicans counted "largely, and upon which they have spent large sums of money." He asked Tilden to persuade Generals Hancock, A. G. McCook, and William B. Franklin to visit Philadelphia for a reception: "I fear we have neglected the soldiers too much. It seems to me that some military exhibition on our side is the only thing to be done before the Pennsylvania election." Hancock, claiming that his Gettysburg wound threatened to reopen, refused to be drawn into the campaign.[60]

The presidential candidate, who himself approached Franklin and McClellan, had better fortune. Convinced that it would do "great harm" if McClellan declined, because he had "more power in Penna. than any living man," Seymour sent the request by personal messenger. He wrote, "You have great strength in that State particularly with the soldiers. The Republicans are making desperate efforts to draw them into the support of Genl Grant. . . . I shall be very much gratified if you will go into Penna. . . ."

[59] New York *Soldier's Friend*, October (monthly issue), October 10, 1868; Chipman to Chandler, October 22, 26, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; New York *Tribune*, October 1, 3, 1868.

[60] Horatio Seymour to Tilden, October 1, 1868, in Bigelow (ed.) *Letters of Samuel Jones Tilden*, I, 247; *id.* to *id.*, October 2, 1868, *ibid.*, 248; Hancock to *id.*, October 10, 1868, *ibid.*, 249.

Unable to resist this flattering appeal, McClellan consented to a single appearance in Philadelphia.[61]

Democrats centered their veterans' demonstration around an elaborate reception for the general, and the McClellan Legion staged an enthusiastic ovation. This affair over, McClellan firmly resisted further appeals for aid with the exception of letters to mass meetings.[62] The Legion, despite its idol's retirement, continued active through the remainder of the campaign.

The army, regimental, state, and county associations, although purely social in character, afforded excellent opportunities to politicians. During the spring and summer these societies held numerous reunions, and political motives were sometimes unsuccessfully disguised. The committee for one of these "social" reunions invited President Johnson to present his "views of the present *critical* condition of the Union, which we struggled to restore." Most of the assemblies, however, met in the interests of the Republican party. "A respectable delegation of Federal soldiers," remarked a reporter about a corps reunion in Kentucky before the campaign's opening, "ought to have a wholesome influence in that rebel stronghold." Although officers and speakers at the Army of the James convention avoided politics, they were all prominent Radicals. The sentiments expressed in addresses and toasts at the meeting of the Reunion Society of Vermont Officers made it a veritable Republican rally. Some regimental reunions were circumspect in their political expressions; others passed resolutions, applauded Radical addresses, or openly gave "cheer upon cheer" for Grant and Colfax.[63]

Republicans even used the Soldiers' Monument Association

[61] Seymour to Tilden, October 2, 1868, *ibid.; id.* to McClellan, October 2, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVII.

[62] Columbus *Crisis*, October 14, 1868; New York *Soldier's Friend*, October 17, 1868; McClellan to Seymour, October 10, 1868, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXVII.

[63] George A. Jones to Johnson, September 25, 1868, Johnson MSS.; Indianapolis *Journal*, November 28, 1867; New York *World*, September 3, 1868; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 12, 1868; *Proceedings of the Reunion Society of Vermont Officers*, I, 79, 82, 97, 99, 101, 104; "Reunion of the Tenth Connecticut Volunteers at Savin Rock," in New York *Soldier's Friend*, October 17, 1868; "Reunion of Tenth Ohio Cavalry" at Mansfield, Ohio, in Cincinnati *Gazette*, June 5, 1868; "Reunion of Fourth Kentucky Infantry" at East Fork, *ibid.*, September 25, 1868; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 12, 26, October 10, 24, November 7, 20, 28, December 5, 1868; Cincinnati *Gazette*, February 6, 1868; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, April 27, May 25, 1868.

of Illinois to further their cause. One man wrote, "The Soldiers' Monument will . . . no doubt succeed, and our party will be stronger next fall than ever. . . ." The society made Grant its president and requested his signature to five thousand certificates of membership. A director, inviting General Sherman to speak at the monument's dedication, remarked, "We expect to serve you some day as we have General Grant and a little mixing with the people on such occasions as this will not retard that movement any." [64]

As for the Grand Army, its open participation in the campaign was rendered unnecessary by the thoroughly organized Boys in Blue. G.A.R. leaders, as well as the *Soldier's Friend,* repeatedly protested that the society had no partisan interests; departments and posts issued similar assurances. The *Soldier's Friend* remarked that members of posts sometimes marched in processions, "but the Grand Army as such, has held aloof from political movements." [65]

Unconvinced, the Democratic press maintained throughout the campaign a continuous barrage of invective against the organization. With an eye to political effect, papers reiterated the charge that G.A.R. leaders plotted violence. The La Crosse *Democrat* urged its party to organize and arm against the society: "It is in the hands of bad men—desperate men. . . . We are by no means satisfied we shall not have to show our strength and readiness to repel . . . violence by the strong hand before the pending canvass shall end." Another paper announced: ". . . upon the least pretence of what they shall deem advisable to call unfairness at the ballot box, this Grand Army of the Republic is to be called out, and blood will be shed." [66]

As a matter of fact, the society no longer threatened violence, but it could not make an overnight change in habits. Posts continued to pass partisan resolutions, and even departmental officials sometimes revealed political bias. A New York post applauded

[64] Smith D. Atkins to Washburne, February 20, 1868, Washburne MSS.; J. C. Smith to *id.*, June 18, 1868, *ibid.;* Giles A. Smith to Sherman, November 16, 1868, W. T. Sherman MSS.

[65] New York *Soldier's Friend,* November 14, 1868.

[66] Quoted in *ibid.,* July (monthly issue), August 29, September 26, October 3, November 28, 1868; *Union White Boys in Blue,* 5.

a speaker's statement that the Grand Army must renew the combat against its former enemies. Indiana's commander officially warned members to beware of the pernicious "White Boys in Blue," which planned the restoration of "rebels to power." Soldiers must avoid a society that had "stolen the livery of heaven to serve the devil in." An Indiana G.A.R. member remarked, "The confidence felt that the Grand Army would 'take care of these fellows'—as we did—was very satisfying." The Michigan department sent 140 delegates to the Chicago veterans' convention under instructions to urge Grant's nomination. Pennsylvania's commander was a leader in campaign work; Connecticut's commander later declared that everyone knew that the Grand Army vote carried the state for Grant.[67]

The society's southern posts were frankly partisan. In January, 1868, the Louisiana encampment announced officially that it would "stand by and support the plan of Reconstruction proposed by . . . Congress." Southerners despised the G.A.R.; General Nathan B. Forrest told a newspaper correspondent that the Ku Klux Klan had developed in Tennessee as a "protection against Loyal Leagues and the Grand Army of the Republic." [68]

But in the North, Grand Army leaders were increasingly trying to avoid open statements and actions, as they perceived the desirability of attracting Democratic recruits. The tactics of 1867 would only alienate Democrats; the society must use a subtler approach. Avoiding any mention of politics, officers emphasized the common brotherhood of veterans, fraternal memories of camp and field, and loyalty to old leaders.

This technique of recalling war memories could scarcely be termed political. Grand Army speakers carefully side-stepped partisan issues and simply harked back to the past. Commander Cushman told his Massachusetts encampment, "We cannot forget

[67] Washington *Great Republic*, May 30, June 27, 1868; undated clipping, Post No. 1 to Butler, June 25, 1867, Butler MSS.; Louis Wagner to *id.*, September 12, 1867, *ibid.*; address of General John Watts de Peyster to Post No. 8, New York City, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, June, 1868; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 141; Cincinnati *Gazette*, May 8, 1868; address of General T. G. Ellis, January 27, 1869, quoted in New York *Soldier's Friend*, March 27, 1869.

[68] Warmoth, *War, Politics and Reconstruction*, 51; interview between Cincinnati *Commercial* correspondent and Gen. N. B. Forrest, *Senate Docs.*, 42 Cong., 2 Sess., Report 51, XIII; New York *Tribune*, September 27, 1867.

the past with its privations and sacrifices, nor forgive the treason which caused them. . . ." Even Commander in Chief Logan turned from dependence on political resolutions to the new method. In his "strictly confidential" request for funds, he reminded the Republican national committee of the society's true purpose: "The organization of the G.A.R. *has been and is being run in the interest of the Republican party*." Publicly, however, he reminded posts of the society's nonpartisanship amendment: "Thousands of soldiers, who would be an ornament to our organization, believing it to be political, are kept away. . . . It is the observation of these Headquarters that those jurisdictions prosper most that eschew politics altogether." [69]

An important phase of the new technique was the series of lectures sponsored by posts to raise funds for orphans and the disabled. It was mainly to arouse sympathy for these unfortunates that such speakers as Schuyler Colfax in 1867 and Clara Barton and William Oland Bourne in 1868 took their audiences back to wartime scenes. Yet Republican politicians, who were also recalling war memories to the public mind, must have regarded these performances with approval. General Hugh Kilpatrick's series of lectures before G.A.R. posts for "benevolent" purposes did much to further the Republican cause; a Connecticut politician wrote that Republicans depended upon him to hold the soldiers: "By his lectures and speeches before the G.A.R. in almost every town in the state he has filled our entire body of citizens with the greatest enthusiasm." Kilpatrick performed equally important work in Massachusetts.[70]

The institution of annual G.A.R. ceremonies for the Union dead coincided with the mounting use of these subtler forms of propaganda. Yet, although the most innocent-appearing projects of Logan and Chipman seemed to have some underlying political motive, no definite evidence exists in this case of such ulterior

[69] Address of Major A. S. Cushman, 4; Logan to Chandler, September 19, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, 35.

[70] New York *Soldier's Friend*, December, 1867, February, 1868 (monthly issues), August 29, 1868; W. H. Kimball to Chandler, October 22, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; E. W. Whitaker to Washburne, January 12, 1869, Washburne MSS.; Benjamin F. Pratt to Butler, December 14, 1868, Butler MSS.

design. Charges that the motive was there were not, of course, lacking.

As early as 1865 southern women were decorating Confederate graves, and during the springtime months of 1866 and 1867 the ceremony spread to the North. James Redpath, reformer and newspaper correspondent, planned what was probably the country's first formal memorial exercises. These took place May 1, 1865, at a Union graveyard near Charleston, South Carolina. Veterans began to participate; in 1867 soldiers at Waterloo, New York, decorated graves, and the following year Cincinnati volunteers held similar services. According to one story, a veteran described the German memorial ceremonies to Chipman, who suggested to Logan that the G.A.R. inaugurate them for the Union dead. On the other hand, Logan's attractive young wife claimed that while visiting Virginia battlefields in March, 1868, she noticed the bleached flags and faded wreaths that southern women had placed on Confederate graves. When she returned to Washington and described the touching ceremony to her husband, he immediately decided to introduce it to the Grand Army. Colonel Charles L. Wilson, editor of the Chicago *Journal*, was present and promised to publicize the idea. Certainly the idea was no new one to Logan; in April, 1866, he had addressed participants in decoration ceremonies at Carbondale, Illinois.[71]

After concluding that May 30 was the best date to find flowers at their peak in the various parts of the country, Logan ordered all posts to decorate the graves of their fallen comrades on that day. He prescribed no form of ceremony, but instructed members to arrange such "testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit." The Commander expressed the hope that the observance would become an annual one. State commanders issued similar or-

[71] New York *Tribune*, May 13, 1865; Charles F. Horner, *Life of James Redpath* (New York, 1926), 113–15; Madison (Ind.) *Daily Courier*, June 27, 1866; Paul H. Buck, *The Road to Reunion, 1865–1900* (Boston, 1937), 116; Wilbur F. Brown (comp.), *Lafayette Post No. 140, Department of New York G.A.R.* (New York, 1900), 36; Swisher, *The Iowa Department of the G.A.R.*, 23; Logan, *Reminiscences*, 243; Mrs. Logan to editor, February 20, 1890, Washington *National Tribune*, March 6, 1890; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1891, pp. 207–208; Ray Hubbs, "First to Remember," in *American Legion Magazine* (New York, 1926–), XXII (1937), 37, 48.

ders to their departments, and on the appointed day posts throughout the country held impressive ceremonies. Merchants closed their shops; in many cities it was a general holiday.[72]

Chipman, chairman of the Washington arrangements committee, took special pains to prepare an imposing demonstration. He requested Johnson to release government workers to attend and issued black-bordered invitations. Glorious spring weather drew a throng of five thousand to Arlington Cemetery, where zealous committee members had placed a small American flag over each of the fifteen thousand soldiers' graves. Before the mourning-draped veranda of Arlington mansion, General and Mrs. Grant joined other public figures in honored positions facing the solemn gathering. After an address by General Garfield, the band played a dirge while a procession formed, headed by children from the Soldier's and Sailor's Orphan Home and Grand Army men. At the massive granite tomb of the unknown soldiers, the column paused for prayer and hymns. The dedication closed as, to the booming of cannon, the orphans carried baskets of flowers through the cemetery, scattering myriads of blossoms over the graves.

It was a fine day, too, in Madison, Wisconsin. Governor Fairchild wrote to his sister,

> 30th AM The sad half hour guns are waking the echoes in memory of our brave soldiers who went down to death. . . . It is a beautiful clear morning, everything blooms The flowers are bright and other foliage green and fresh—just the fitting time to go to the home of the dead. Ladies and children are constantly bringing in flowers to my office—until we have a huge pile of them—
>
> 31st AM The ceremonies yesterday were of the most interesting character—Our citizens were out in large numbers. The procession was over a mile long, composed of returned soldiers, Mayor and counsil [*sic*] Home children—Faculty and students of the University and citizens generally—Each

[72] Logan, *Reminiscences*, 245; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, May 13, 1868; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, May 26, 1868; New York *Tribune*, May 30, June 1, 1868; Washington *Daily National Intelligencer*, June 1, 1868; Washington *National Republican*, June 1, 1868.

and all were provided with flowers, besides a whole wagon load—more than 2000 people were at the cemetery.[73]

Few Memorial Day speakers could be charged with open partisanship; their emphasis was upon the "sacred cause" for which the soldiers fought, and upon the nation's duty to provide adequate care for the survivors and for the widows and orphans of the fallen. There was considerable indirect praise of congressional Reconstruction, however, and in some cases speakers seized the opportunity to recall war issues. At St. Louis, Carl Schurz did so delicately but effectively. One orator declaimed, "The work . . . is not yet fully complete, for there are to be found in many of the Northern States enough of those who, under the name of Democrats, array themselves against impartial popular rights. . . ." The New York *Tribune* believed that on Memorial Day the soldier would remind every citizen of his "duty." The air would be full "of bitter rebuke to the promoters and the dupes of faction." [74]

Charges immediately appeared that the ceremonies would intensify sectional animosity. The New York *Times* asserted that such services, neither feeding widows nor clothing orphans, served the dead no good purpose. They would only rekindle the "smouldering flames that are almost extinguished in the breasts of the people of the two sections." One newspaper correspondent suggested that the ceremonies were initiated for partisan purposes, a charge that the G.A.R. vehemently denied.[75]

Yet certainly many were aware of the occasion's political potentialities. One Republican observer noted with satisfaction the reaction of a former Copperhead, who wept as she listened to the eulogistic praise of the Union dead. "She was but the repre-

[73] Chipman to Johnson, May 26, 1868, Johnson MSS.; *id.* to Chandler (printed invitation), May 27, 1868, Zachariah Chandler MSS.; New York *Tribune*, June 1, 1868; Fairchild to his sister, May 30–31, 1868, Fairchild MSS.

[74] Frank Moore (ed.), *Memorial Ceremonies at the Soldiers' Graves*, May 30, 1868 (Washington, 1869), preface (unnumbered) and pp. 133, 388, 588, 646; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, June 4, July 1, 1868; Washington *National Republican*, June 1, 1868; address of A. J. Willard at Charleston, S.C., in Moore (ed.), *Memorial Ceremonies*, 107; New York *Tribune*, June 1, 1868.

[75] New York *Times*, quoted in New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 27, 1868; New York *Weekly Journal of Commerce*, June 4, 1868.

sentative of a large number who having wandered in sympathy away from the Union fold, were drawn thither again on the day. . . . In Kentucky much good has been accomplished by this ceremony. It has served to kindle a new devotion to the good cause in many a heart. . . ." From Winchester, Virginia, came the enthusiastic report that the services, "besides showing us 'who is who,' " would "greatly tend to bring [the participants] closer together for the furtherance of the Union cause." Aside from possible political effects, the G.A.R.'s inauguration of the custom had the immediate result of stimulating veterans' interest in the organization.[76]

While the Grand Army engaged in subtle forms of propaganda, the parades and addresses of the two veterans' campaign organizations continued to give a military aspect to the campaign. Moreover, soldier-politicians not only warned that Democrats plotted violence but threatened resort to arms should their opponents win at the polls. General Butler wrote, "I agree with you there will be another war. If the democrats win. . . . Such a war engendered by them would be no child's play or Rose water affair." Governor Fairchild warned: ". . . if Seymour is Elected and undertakes to carry out the revolutionary schemes to which he and his party are committed, there will be music by the whole band, and traitors will be effectially [*sic*] squelched. . . ." The Madison *Wisconsin State Journal* was convinced that civil war could not be avoided if Seymour were elected. Some Democratic veterans, taking these threats seriously, offered their services to Johnson. One man proffered the "assistance of a Regiment of the best Warriors who stood the brunt of battles during the late Rebellion, all faithful men." [77]

In the large cities the two veterans' organizations opposed each other in battle array, but only occasionally did they resort to actual violence. There were some Democrat-inspired cases of disorder, and the Republican press loudly publicized these. One

[76] Cincinnati *Gazette*, June 4, 1868; Moore, *Memorial Services*, 33; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September, 1868.

[77] Butler to R. Marsden, August 4, 1868, Butler MSS.; Fairchild to his sister, Sarah, July 28, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, July 15, September 13, 1868, *ibid.*; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, October 7, 1868; New York *Tribune*, August 1, 1868; Campbell to Johnson, March 9, 1868, Johnson MSS.

regrettable instance occurred in St. Louis when White Boys in Blue, inflamed by speeches, ransacked a Negro grocery store and then proceeded to break up a colored church festival. During the shooting a spent bullet struck a White Boy officer. Such cases led one Republican paper to warn that there would "be, almost certainly, some fighting and possibly bloodshed before the end is reached." [78]

At times, indeed, the Fighting Boys in Blue saw more action than they cared for; they never knew when scornful Democrats might attack their processions with stones, bricks, or even bullets. The monster Philadelphia parade was fired upon, critically injuring one Republican. Missiles hurled at veteran-marchers in Cincinnati seriously hurt a Grand Army man and gave Logan, the guest of honor, an ugly head gash. At least one case of retaliation was recorded when an Indianapolis parade of White Boys was fired upon from a dark alley.[79]

But in general the veterans confined their weapons to flaring torches. Since the immediate needs of volunteers had been met by 1868, their participation in politics had become somewhat artificial. Moreover the fact that a number of the war's most prominent leaders, among them Sherman, Thomas, Meade, Sheridan, Hancock, and McClellan, refused to participate in the campaign dampened the veterans' enthusiasm to some extent.

The election results in the "October states" left the issue in little doubt, but the Boys in Blue continued their frenzied antics to the end of the campaign. Some believed that the organization's activity contributed to the Republican victory. After the election the *Soldier's Friend* remarked, "In some districts they have been the moving force of the campaign, and in others they have equalled, and even surpassed, the regular organizations by the excellence of their meetings and the character and tone of their speakers. We think we do not exaggerate when we say that the services they have rendered to the cause have been of very material importance in the attainment of the grand result, and that, had the Boys in Blue, as an organization, refrained from entering the

[78] Cincinnati *Gazette*, August 20, 1868.

[79] Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, October 3, 1868; Cincinnati *Gazette*, August 24, September 22, 1868; Utica *Daily Observer*, October 12, 1868.

contest, the results would have been far less brilliant and satisfactory." General Alfred Pleasonton, prominent leader of the society, told Fairchild that although the Radicals lost New York, "what was done" was due more to the Boys in Blue "than any other organization." [80]

Democratic veterans' societies also marched and shouted to the end, but organizers never succeeded in arousing enthusiasm for the Peace candidate. The two leading idols of Democratic veterans, McClellan and Hancock, had steadily refused to participate in the campaign. With Hancock as candidate, Democratic veterans might have developed a soldiers' organization of sufficient power to counteract the effect of Republican appeals to the veterans' vote. The peace element of the party would have supported the general as the lesser of two evils, while veterans would have been open-minded toward Hancock, as they were not in the case of Seymour. Had Grant been opposed by a soldier, the Republicans' imposing military parades and rallies, veterans' reunions, and addresses to soldiers would have lacked significance. With Hancock as their standard bearer, the Democrats might, in fact, have brought the struggle to a different conclusion.[81] He would have profited by McClellan's support.

Even against an admittedly weak candidate, Grant's majority was surprisingly small; Seymour received 47.29 per cent of the popular vote. One observer felt strongly that the Democrats had thrown away a "great opportunity": "In nominating Seymour the war issue was unavoidably raised. . . . There was no zeal for Grant until Seymour was nominated. . . . men would have been busy had Hancock been his opponent." On the other hand, one of the Democrats' best opportunities lay in the financial question, and Hancock, a sound-money man, could have done little to drive this issue home. Moreover, Republican propagandists might have made even a Union general appear the tool of southerners, as they were to do quite successfully with Hancock in 1880. With the choice presented to them, the veterans undoubtedly contributed

[80] New York *Soldier's Friend,* November 14, 1868; General A. Pleasonton to Fairchild, November 7, 1868, Fairchild MSS.

[81] Coleman, *Election of 1868,* 376, 377–79; Smith, *The Blair Family,* II, 429; Flick, *Samuel Jones Tilden,* 188.

to Grant's victory. Had the alternative been one of their own leaders, even though a less-outstanding one, perhaps financial and Reconstruction issues might have divided their vote.[82]

The difficulty of obtaining funds from the National Republican Committee had discouraged many veterans' organizers. One man wrote, "The accounts of the 'Boys in Blue' so far as I am concerned are now closed & after a demonstration on the 4th of March next, in the way of a jollification at the inauguration, I hope never to be caught in a similar scrape again." After planning a Washington demonstration for Grant's inauguration, the national committee of the Boys in Blue lapsed into silence.[83]

But some branches continued their activities. The Washington club became a permanent association in order to "act as an auxiliary of the Republican party of the District of Columbia," as well as to urge city improvements and manufactures. It promised to encourage recognition of "the industrial elements that are so essential to the prosperity of the District." General Pleasonton stated that the New York clubs planned "to continue our organization and place it foremost here and then we can head New York back to the loyal ranks." One New York City club announced that it expected to extend "its influence by cultivating a spirit of patriotism and love of republican institutions." [84]

On the other hand, G.A.R. leaders planned to strengthen their organization with continued assertions of nonpartisanship. Occasionally the fiery words of an address or post resolution belied the claim of its leaders; but as time went on, more and more officers took the position that their society was above politics. Constantly they reiterated that charity to war victims was the organization's sole reason for existence. In carrying out this object, however, the society disseminated, perhaps unconsciously on the part of many members, propaganda that was definitely political in its effect. As the speaker at the dedication of a post

[82] Smith, *The Blair Family*, II, 426, 429; Welles, *Diary*, III, 400, 438, 445, 450, 457, 458, 464; Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal*, October 17, 1868.

[83] Chipman to Chandler, October 22 and 26, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; Charles K. Graham to *id.*, November 19, 1868, *ibid.*

[84] New York *Tribune*, November 12, December 18, 1868; New York *Soldier's Friend*, December 5, 1868; Pleasonton to Fairchild, November 7, 1868, Fairchild MSS.

hall proclaimed, "The Grand Army would serve as the rifle above the chimney piece, the coat of mail under the toga. . . . The Grand Army had principles that would educate the loyal sentiment of the country. . . ." [85]

[85] New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 4, 1869.

CHAPTER SIX

The Quiescent Years

AFTER THE ELECTION of 1868, the victorious Republicans lost interest in veterans' organizations, while former soldiers, their immediate economic needs satisfied, also grew indifferent. For many volunteers the period of adjustment to civilian society was successfully completed, so that the social as well as the political need for group solidarity had disappeared. During the 1870's, gatherings of county, state, regimental, and army organizations dwindled as members devoted full attention to family ties and jobs.

Yet it would be easy to underestimate the veterans' importance in this period of comparative apathy. The Republican party still based its claims for support upon its record as savior of the Union, and the serviceman stood inevitably in the foreground of the picture it presented to the public. An observation on Ohio politics might well be applied to the North as a whole: ". . . scarcely a county that had not some colonel or general whose personality impressed the popular imagination . . . and in the political campaigns their faces, pale or red in the flare of the torches of those vast and tumultuous processions that still staged the political contest in the terms of war, looked down from the festooned [Republican] platforms in every public square." And Republicans were not unmindful of obligations for the benefits they derived from their display of the uniform; they rewarded veterans with appointments as well as nominations. When Washington Grand Army members visited their President shortly after his inauguration to urge the claims of wounded soldiers to positions, Grant expressed "warm interest" in these crippled heroes and "plainly intimated" that they would not be overlooked. The administra-

tion kept its promise, and, in the customs service especially, disabled soldiers "contributed a general appearance of inefficiency to the . . . staff." [1]

Nor did Republicans forget the able-bodied veteran in their appointments and nominations, and on state and county tickets their opponents continued to follow suit. One Republican complained that Democrats were stealing "the principles of the Republicans. Hence they talk of Unionism, of their love for the soldier, of their care for the soldier's widow and orphan, and to carry the blind still farther, they place soldiers in nomination for office. . . ." [2]

Gratitude for this recognition was by no means universal among veterans; considerable dissatisfaction was expressed along lines similar to the following volunteer's complaint: ". . . generals and colonels, etc, get all the lucrative offices; the insignificant clerkships and the like being left for the privates. . . ." A former soldier whose service cost him his lower jaw and part of a shoulder blade was even more bitter: ". . . as soon as the Elections are over they forget all about their promises and appoint some *Negro* or *Citizen* that Never was in the army. . . ." In 1868 the Rhode Island G.A.R. complained to its congressional representatives that campaign pledges of federal appointments to veterans had not been fulfilled. The following year Democratic servicemen of Massachusetts were frankly dissatisfied with their party's nominations. Pennsylvania volunteers expressed equal disgust for the Republican record; the state Grand Army encampment announced official and "emphatic" disapproval of "the manner in which the claims of the soldier have been ignored by those who control the national appointments." [3]

[1] Brand Whitlock, *Forty Years of It* (New York, 1914), 28; New York *Soldier's Friend*, March 27, 1869.

[2] George Frederick Howe, *Chester A. Arthur, A Quarter-Century of Machine Politics* (New York, 1934), 52; Nat Rollins to Fairchild, November 26, 1869, Fairchild MSS.

[3] "J.M.D." to editor, New York *Soldier's Friend*, February 27, 1869; "Shanghai" to Fairchild, undated (probably 1869), Fairchild MSS.; J. Robert Lathrope to William Allen, October 7, 1873, William Allen MSS. (1825–77), Library of Congress; New York *Tribune*, August 28, 1869; *Proceedings Annual and Semi-Annual Encampments, Department of Rhode Island, from Its Organization in 1867 to 1883, Inclusive* (Providence, 1887), 28 (hereinafter cited as *Rhode Island G.A.R. Proceedings, 1867–1883*); *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872,*

In short, the feeling was current that politicians had granted niggardly rewards for heroic sacrifices. What was lacking, however, was an agency or individual sufficiently clever to encourage and unify these complaints and thus make them politically effective. That would come later. Several soldiers' newspapers, to be sure, believed that they were performing this function; but they lacked the initiative and driving power of the yet unborn Washington *National Tribune.*

At the peak of its youthful strength, the Grand Army appeared to be the ideal instrument for prodding an increasingly indifferent public into awareness of its obligations to the nation's heroes. But the rapidity of the organization's disintegration after Grant's victory destroyed its bargaining power and gave credence to Democratic charges that Republican victory, not veterans' benefits, was the G.A.R.'s chief objective. Leaders vehemently denied the accusations; the *Soldier's Friend* underlined these protestations with the plea, "Will the political journals which, for so long a time, denounced the Grand Army as a secret armed political organization, now that the campaign is over, have the candor to . . . give their readers correct information of its objects and labors?" The 1869 encampment officially declared, "Whatsoever suspicion of political nature may have heretofore attached to the Grand Army of the Republic as to its being a political organization, that we hereby declare it above and independent of all partisan feeling and action. . . ." But pronouncements were not enough to whiten the society's reputation.[4]

Undoubtedly the suspicion of political aims was the rock upon which the organization foundered in the early 1870's. Abundant evidence points to the conclusion that many members allowed their names to be dropped from the rolls as the obvious gulf between the nonpartisan pledge and actual activities seemed to vindicate newspaper accusations. Officers' statements sometimes re-

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43; New York *Soldier's Friend,* August 14, 1869; *Journal First to Thirteenth Encampments, Department of New Hampshire, Including an Historical Sketch of the Organization of the Provisional Department,* 1868–80 (Concord, 1889), 20 (hereinafter cited as *Journal First to Thirteenth Encampments, New Hampshire G.A.R.*); Colonel E. H. Rhodes to Fairchild, February 17, 1893, Fairchild MSS.

[4] New York *Soldier's Friend,* January 16, June 19, 1869; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.,* 73.

vealed the inconsistency between profession and intention. In general, however, the floods of addresses, orders, and resolutions avowed undying devotion to the partisanship ban.[5]

The fact that these were belied by persistent dabblings in politics destroyed any possibility that public support might replace the waning interest of politicians. The words of Bret Harte's "Old Major" in 1871 probably expressed a general view:

> And then, for an old man like me, it's not exactly right
> This kind o' playing soldier with no enemy in sight.
> "The Union."—that was well enough way up to '66
> But this "Re-Union," maybe now it's mixed with politics? [6]

Although Logan and Chipman had optimistically extended their machine into the Far West, they were unable to hold it together even in the region of its birth. Chipman was at first highly successful in his diligent efforts at reorganization on an efficient basis. Late in 1868 he proudly announced the existence of thirty-eight departments "with nearly three thousand posts, and a membership exceeding four hundred thousand." But a few months after the presidential campaign, Chipman admitted that although the "entire territory of the United States" had been organized into departments, only 2,050 posts were active. The society was still expanding in the East, but it had "stood still in the West." He had

[5] "Report of Adjutant General William T. Collins," in *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 117–18; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 77; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Vermont G.A.R.* (1868–1920), *6th Encampment*, 1873, p. 7 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings [of various] Encampment[s] Vermont G.A.R.*); *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of New York G.A.R.* (1870 [4th Encampment]–1948 [another publication under way]), 1873, p. 86 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*); "General Orders No. 19," Washington, D.C., December 30, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, January 16, 1869; address to National Encampment, 1869, *ibid.*, June 26, 1869; address to National Encampment, 1870, New York *Tribune*, May 12, 1870; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 72; Logan's address to National Encampment, 1871, *ibid.*, 106; Connecticut Encampment, August 12, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 12, 1868; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 11, 16, 40; order of Daniel E. Sickles, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, February (monthly issue), 1869; "General Order No. 2," Wisconsin G.A.R., March 1, 1869, *ibid.*, April 3, 1869; Pennsylvania Encampment, July 12, 1869, *ibid.*, August 14, 1869; MS. records at beginning of *Proceedings Encampments Vermont G.A.R.*, January 6, 1870; New York *Soldier's Friend*, January 16, November 12, 1869, January (monthly issue), 1869.

[6] Bret Harte, *Writings of Bret Harte* (New York, 1896–1903), 19 vols., XII, 23.

received no reports from Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri, Arkansas, New Mexico, Montana, Nebraska, and several southern states.[7]

And even in the East the partisanship accusations were having their effect. While New Jersey's commander complained of the soldiers' indifference and a Pennsylvania officer announced that political activities were driving them away, Rhode Island's commander battled determinedly against national officers who were "manipulating local elections in partizan interests." By 1871, when western departments were completely disorganized, the society had disintegrated also in Maine, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Maryland. Moreover, the organization owed $3,567.52, a large part of which had been advanced by Chipman and Owen.[8]

Many Grand Army leaders were convinced that partisanship was responsible for the association's difficulties. One member declared that "political cliques" had abandoned the Illinois Department "as soon as they had accomplished their selfish purposes, and left to their successors a mere shadow." A national adjutant general reported that politics was the disease of which the Nebraska Department had died. Another member remarked that Missouri posts had nominated candidates for political offices—and elected them. By 1872 this department was a "hopeless waste." Robert Beath told the Pennsylvania encampment that whether the manipulators had succeeded or failed in their use of the Grand Army, the result had been everywhere the same: the members' desertion of the organization. General Roswell Miller reported that politicians, once so eager to hold Grand Army offices, had lost interest; national headquarters attributed the disorganization of the Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, and West Virginia departments to the neglect of their leaders. Indicative of this trend was

[7] "General Orders No. 18," November 14, 1868, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, December, 1868 (monthly issue); "General Orders No. 19," December 30, 1868, *ibid.*, February (monthly issue), 1869; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, January 21, 1869; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 36, 37–45; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 1882, p. 152.

[8] New York *Soldier's Friend*, April, 1869 (monthly issue); *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, report of Robert Beath, January 26, 1870, p. 57; *Rhode Island G.A.R. Proceedings, 1867–1883*, 51; *ibid.*, address of Charles R. Brayton to state encampment, January 16, 1872, p. 75; *Proceedings Maine G.A.R.*, 30; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 48, 87, 90; *ibid.*, report of W. T. Collins, May 10, 1871, pp. 117–21.

the fact that Congressman Hurlbut, past commander in chief, allowed his membership to lapse.[9]

Most politicians were too impatient to undertake the slow task of rebuilding the society's strength under the guise of nonpartisanship. The Connecticut commander, boasting to his encampment that the Grand Army had carried the state for Grant, condemned the " 'namby-pamby,' over-cautious counsels, which would emasculate our order, and destroy all its influence." [10]

In 1872 the inspector general reported that while Massachusetts, the most prosperous department, boasted 146 posts, the society was completely demoralized in the West and the South. National headquarters had hopefully sent Rhode Island's commander into the South, but public feeling against the society's political activities nullified his efforts at reorganization. Angry southerners gave Tennessee members the choice of leaving the state or of disavowing membership; in Kentucky they whipped a post commander and assassinated another member. By 1873 the society was reviving in Illinois, but efforts to resuscitate it elsewhere in the West and in the South were futile. The adjutant general concluded that the Grand Army could never succeed in the South because Union veterans were too scattered to contend against public prejudice. In many places former Confederates boycotted businessmen suspected of membership. The few who dared to join concealed the fact "as if it were a capital crime." [11]

Other issues heightened tensions and hastened demoralization. General Logan's administration was efficient, but his rigid central control seemed a dictatorship to irritated departmental officers. One complained that the introduction of "an iron rule of 'discipline' " and the exaction of prompt obedience "under an implied threat of dismemberment, was carrying the rule of authority to extremes." Logan's stipulation that rituals, application blanks,

[9] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 252, 371; *ibid.*, report of Roswell Miller, 149–50; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, 57; Merrill, "Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts," *loc. cit.*, 115.

[10] Address to department encampment, January 27, 1869, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, March 27, 1869.

[11] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 120, 121, 181–83, 239; *ibid.*, report of Robert B. Beath, 165–70; *ibid.*, report of Roswell Miller, 209–11; *ibid.*, report of W. W. Brown, 291; James Gillette to his father, October 28, 1867, Gillette MSS.

and other printed material must be bought from national headquarters was another annoyance. Local officers, grumbling that headquarters made "several hundred per cent profit," wanted to print their own supplies. From the beginning, posts and departments had received coldly any suggestion that they bear a share of the organization's expenses, and they continued to resist all forms of assessment.[12]

Another scheme to make the society self-supporting reached beyond local officers to the body of the members, who responded with obstinate resistance. A committee appointed in 1868 to revise the ritual adopted a system of three degrees under which members must apply anew for admission. They were to pay a small fee for this, as well as for advancement to a higher degree. The national encampment adopted the plan in 1869, but the veterans refused to submit to another initiation. According to a Pennsylvania official, "posts were lost by the hundred, and members by the thousand." [13]

Opposition to Logan's policies reached a climax at the 1870 encampment, when General Fairchild united with Indiana delegates in an attempt to overthrow the "dynasty" and elect Ohio's General Robert C. Schenck as Commander. Logan managed to keep the post for another year, but by 1871, when he was defeated for re-election, he could no longer deny the disastrous results of the grade system. On his recommendation the encampment abandoned the experiment.[14]

If the strife-torn and apparently moribund Grand Army was in no position to direct a veterans' movement, three groups managed to keep the former soldiers conscious of group identity. The

[12] Wilson, *Grand Army*, 135; "Circular No. 1," June 25, 1869, signed by Logan, quoted *ibid.*, 70; "General Orders No. 1," May 22, 1869, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 12, 1869.

[13] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 64–67, 90, 114; *ibid.*, report of W. T. Collins, 83; "General Orders No. 6," November 4, 1869, in New York *Soldier's Friend*, November 19, 1869; Robert Beath, "G.A.R.," in *Field and Post Room* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1886), January, 1886, p. 3; *id.*, *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, report, 63; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1871, p. 60; Merrill, "Grand Army of the Republic in Massachusetts," *loc. cit.*, 115; Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 152, 170, 182.

[14] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 149, 197; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 108–109; "General Orders No. 1" (signed A. E. Burnside, Commander in Chief, May 29, 1871), in New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 27, 1871.

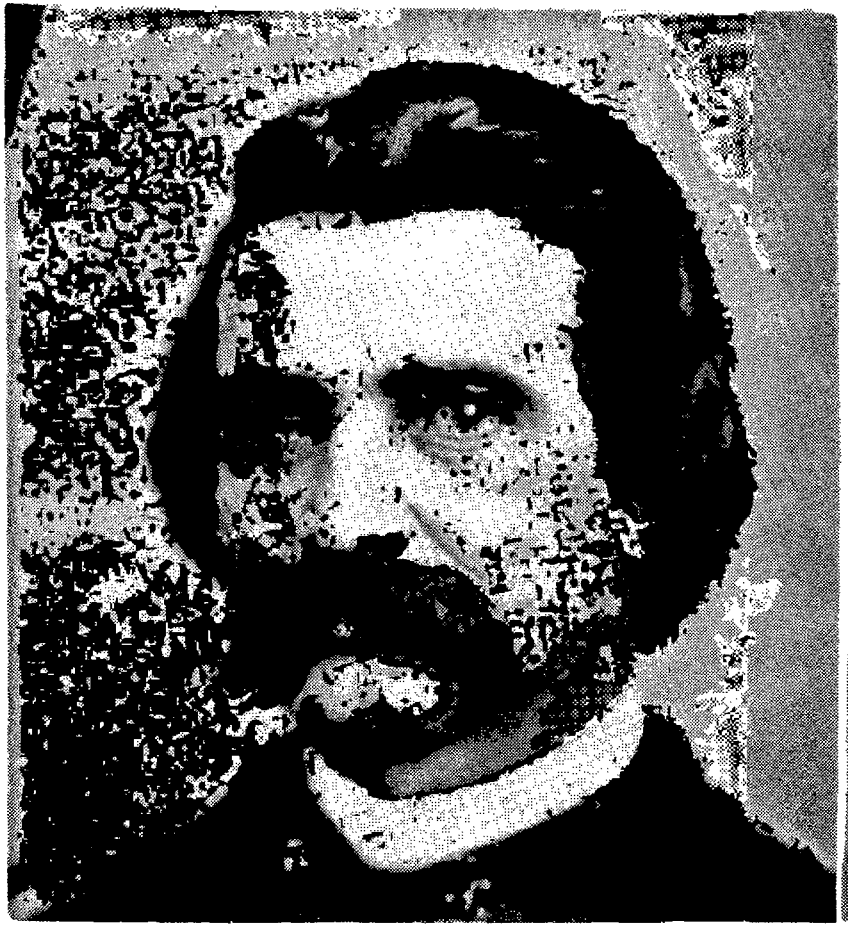
first, the organizers of veterans, were minor Republican politicians who found their niche in this specialized party work. The most energetic workers, Chipman, Dudley, and J. T. Owen, were prominent G.A.R. officials as well as Boys in Blue leaders. During the campaign of 1868 Chipman had written that only the organized soldiers had provided "respectable mass meetings." The steady faith of Chipman, Dudley, Owen, William A. Short, and Drake De Kay that a well-directed veterans' organization would win elections drove them to Herculean efforts. They remained undiscouraged through bitter struggles with the Republican National Committee for funds and sometimes advanced their own money to finance campaign organizations. These zealots were determined to perpetuate the Boys in Blue; a few months after their carefully planned inaugural demonstration, they met to plan the society's "thorough reorganization." [15]

The second group was composed of more prominent Republican politicians who regarded the veterans' movement more in terms of their own personal success rather than in that of their party. Governor Morton of Indiana typified these clever manipulators who constantly depended upon soldiers to advance their careers. A political opponent, discussing with more truth than kindness the governor's "wordy devotion to the Union soldiery," remarked that no one had used the veterans "more diligently . . . toward furthering his own personal ambition and worldly betterment. . . . And not one, perhaps, has been so successful. . . ." [16] Since the outbreak of the war, Morton had derived considerable benefit from his canny knowledge of how and when to appeal to the soldiers. But in the light of Grand Army activities during the 1880's, the maneuverings of Generals Fairchild and Logan were far more significant than his.

Angling for the senatorship when he failed to get a foreign mission from Grant, Fairchild made good use of the Madison *Soldiers' Record* to advance his cause. Also, he instructed a supporter to correspond with soldiers throughout the state. As senatorial prospects dwindled, he began pondering a third guberna-

[15] Chipman to Chandler, September 19, 1868, W. E. Chandler MSS.; Logan to *id.*, September 19, 1868, *ibid.*; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 48, 87, 90; New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 4, 1869.

[16] "X" to the editor, undated, Indianapolis *Daily Sentinel*, July 3, 1872.



JOHN A. LOGAN

National Archives

LUCIUS FAIRCHILD

torial term and urged his workers to see that veterans attended primary meetings and that they were sent to the state convention. This time Fairchild was successful; he received the nomination. With the enthusiastic support of the veterans and the *Soldiers' Record*, he emerged victorious from the campaign.[17]

The governor, cognizant that similar methods might place him on the national political scene, seized every opportunity to achieve a prominent position among his comrades in arms. He sought the governorship of the federal soldiers' homes and regarded his post as second in command of the Grand Army as a mere stepping-stone. Informed in 1872 that General Ambrose E. Burnside would refuse a second term as commander in chief, Fairchild asked Wisconsin's commander to suggest his name to the various departments. Indications were at first favorable, but when Burnside consented to a renomination, Fairchild found himself without support. It was to be more than a decade before the governor achieved the coveted position.[18]

Logan's tactics were similar. In 1871 he found the Illinois G.A.R. helpful in his campaign for the senatorship, and he apparently used the society to start a presidential boom. The New York *Tribune*, reporting a rapidly developing movement for Logan in 1872, announced that the G.A.R. had formed its nucleus and given it "strength and organization at the start." Logan's ardent campaign in Congress for bounty equalization, his constant agitation of sectional issues, and his vindictive opposition to the reinstatement of Fitz-John Porter were bids for veterans' favor as well as incidents in his party's bloody-shirt policy.[19]

[17] Robert McCurdy to Fairchild, August 6, 1868, Fairchild MSS.; H. Drew to *id.*, August 11, 1868, *ibid.;* Fairchild to his sister Sarah, November 17, 1868, *ibid.;* Watrous to Fairchild, August 3, 1868, *ibid.;* Fairchild to Watrous, August 6, 1868, Fairchild Letter Books; *id.* to P. M. Pryor, November 14, 1868, *ibid.; id.* to Watrous, November 14, 1868, *ibid.; id.* to Gen. W. S. Ultey, March 1, 1869, *ibid.; id.* to Gen. J. A. Kellogg, April 21, 1869, *ibid.; id.* to Col. Ed Colman, April 14, 1869, *ibid.; id.* to Watrous, April 21, 1869, *ibid.;* Mrs. Fairchild to Fairchild, March 30, 1869, Fairchild MSS.; Kellogg to *id.*, March 3, 1869, *ibid.;* Madison *Soldiers' Record*, July 24, September 4, 11, 25, October 9, 17, November 12, 1869; F. W. Parsons to Fairchild, October 25, 1871, Fairchild MSS.

[18] Fairchild to his brother Charles, September 28, 1869, Fairchild MSS.; E. M. Rhodes to Fairchild, January 17, 1872, *ibid.;* Brayton to *id.*, October 25, 1871, *ibid.;* Parsons to *id.*, October 25, 1871, *ibid.;* Edward Ferguson to *id.*, January 26, 29, February 14, 1872, *ibid.;* Barnum to *id.*, February 4, 1872, *ibid.*

[19] Thomas J. McCormack (ed.) *Memoirs of Gustave Koerner, 1809–1896*

In Ohio, General Rutherford B. Hayes worked more quietly but none the less sedulously to the same end. During his campaign for governor, his supporters concentrated on the soldier vote; so successful were they that they could predict his majority a fortnight before the election. His efforts to establish a soldiers' and sailors' orphan home served to maintain his popularity among volunteers.[20]

Claim agents comprised the third group that encouraged an organized veterans' movement. Although they did not achieve real power until George Lemon attained prominence, these parasites were by no means ineffectual during the 1870's. In 1870 the chairman of the House Military Committee declared their influence to be "one of the most potent . . . we have, and one that we shall have to watch very carefully in the future, or millions and tens of millions will be taken out of the Treasury. . . . They support newspapers and organize agencies with a view to operating on the public mind and Congress." [21]

Through the medium of soldiers' publications these agents constantly impressed upon veterans the desirability of organizing to demand legislation. At first these papers, such as the *Soldier's Friend* and the Washington *Great Republic*, had displayed indifference to the attorneys' interests by publicizing their unethical practices. Scarcely troubling to conceal their political purpose, they had frankly championed the Republican cause. But in the 1870's, when pension agents gained control of veterans' publications, they offered support to Republicans only in return for legislation that would increase their fees. Progressively more condemnatory as Republicans failed to pass bounty legislation, they threatened to swing veterans' support to the Democrats.[22]

In some cases these papers turned even upon the Grand Army, as did the *Soldier's Friend* in 1869. J. M. Dalzell charged through

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(Cedar Rapids, 1909), 2 vols., II, 520; Richard Darnstaedt to Logan, January 25, 1871, Logan MSS.; New York *Tribune*, March 20, 1871; Logan, *Reminiscences*, 395–97; New York *Soldier's Friend*, May 1, October 16, 1869.

[20] Eckenrode, *Hayes*, 87, 90.

[21] *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., January 2, July 13, 1870, pp. 341–46, 5513.

[22] New York *Soldier's Friend*, April (monthly issue), 1868; *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 3 Sess., February 24, 1869, p. 315; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, September 9, 1870.

the columns of the Madison *Soldiers' Record* that the society was "a grand lottery in which Generals and Colonels all draw prizes in the shape of fat offices and the rank and file all draw blanks. . . . It has elected 274 Generals and Colonels to Congress, 1596 Generals and Colonels to the State Legislatures and not one private." The time was not yet ripe for that coalition between pension agents and G.A.R. leaders that would make the society a powerful lobbying organization; in the meantime soldiers were urged to ignore the Grand Army and build anew to create a political force. Although an attempt to create such a society ended in failure, the veterans' interest in organization began to revive under the prodding of the agents. The latter even gave the boys advice on how to make their regimental and county reunions more interesting to the public.[23]

The agents became increasingly vociferous in their demands upon Congress. Repeated failures to push through Schenck's old bounty-equalization bill drove them to insist upon land bounties. Although soldiers of the three previous American wars had received land rewards, the issue was late in developing because under the Homestead Law of 1862 veterans were already entitled to land which they were willing to occupy and farm. Even so, congressmen had discussed land-bounty rewards throughout the war, and in 1864 they reduced the minimum homestead residence requirement for the soldier who had served at least two years. Volunteers who had assumed that they would receive land grants similar to those of Mexican War veterans did a certain amount of grumbling. This was particularly true in Indiana, where the Democratic press repeatedly charged the Republican congressional majority with defaulting on its obligations.[24]

In 1864 Congress made a concession to the soldiers by permitting them to make homestead affidavits before their commanding officers rather than before the district land agents. This was on the

[23] New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 7, 1869; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, April 30, June 20, 1872.

[24] *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 3 Sess., February 24–March 2, 1869, pp. 1532, 1782, 1797; *ibid.*, 41 Cong., 2 Sess., January 24, 31, March 18, April 4, 7, 30, May 12, June 17, July 9, 12, 13, 1870, pp. 707, 709, 2068, 2072, 2401, 2491, 3120, 3381, 3413, 4519–20, 4567, 5423, 5470, 5533; Roy M. Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage, the Public Domain, 1776–1936* (Princeton, 1942), 214; Indianapolis *Daily State Sentinel*, August 12, 1872.

understanding, however, that their families were occupying and improving the land. Soon after the war Congress discussed land bounties, but it dropped the matter when the House Committee on Public Lands reported unfavorably. In 1867 and 1868 the project reappeared in the House, but again the committee expressed opposition. Speculators, George Julian warned, would buy the land warrants "and make them the basis of new and most fearful monopolies of the public domain." His suspicion was well founded; warrants to veterans of previous wars had been of benefit principally to speculators, who bought them up wholesale. In 1869 a House bill attempted to meet objections by making warrants unassignable, but opponents killed it with the reminder that Congress would soon remove the limitation. Champions of soldiers urged the land-certificate bills in order to conform with the current congressional "spirit of retrenchment" against cash bounties; but as Garfield complained, the land-gift proposals continued to be "fiercely attacked." [25]

Defeats only stimulated claim agents to greater efforts, and veterans' papers denounced congressional injustice. "The broad fields lie beckoning to the brave boys," one cried. "They belong to them . . . and the government has no right to deed them away to great monied corporations." Congress responded in July, 1870, by empowering soldiers and their heirs to enter 160 acres of railroad lands, double the number allowed civilians. But the minimum homestead requirement of one year's residence remained, and agents were unsatisfied. Under their prodding, congressmen introduced a number of bills to liberalize the act. Especially energetic in forcing land bounties on Republicans was Editor S. W. Martin, who toured Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa to address veterans' gatherings and collect signatures for his land-bounty petitions. He made his *Soldiers' Record* a club to pound the once-idolized Republicans, declaring that their souls were "frozen over

[25] Approved May 21, 1864, 38 Cong., 1 Sess., Ch. 38, 1864, *United States Statutes at Large*, XIII, 35; Julian, *Political Recollections*, 277–79; *Cong. Globe*, 40 Cong., 2 Sess., February 25, July 13, 1868, p. 1418, Appendix, 422; *ibid.*, 1 Sess., November 30, 1867, p. 814; *ibid.*, 3 Sess., January 12, 1869, pp. 313–14; Benjamin Horace Hibbard, *A History of the Public Land Policies* (New York, 1939), 126–29; Garfield to Gen. B. F. Potts, June 20, 1868, Garfield Letter Books.

with Greenland ice" for insisting that the nation's heroes must settle the land in order to acquire it. His furious campaign against C. C. Washburn, Wisconsin's Republican gubernatorial candidate and opponent of land bounties, brought joy to Democrats.[26]

The land-bounty movement received impetus when Logan, always eager to win credit for bills favoring veterans, assumed its leadership. In 1870 the G.A.R. encampment, still under his control, urged Congress to donate "tracts of public land" to soldiers. The following winter Logan introduced a soldiers' homestead bill in the House, and a few months later he urged the Grand Army to press the next Congress for both land and cash bounties. The encampment of 1871 accordingly requested the House to pass the new bills. One land-bounty agitator, armed with Logan's letters of introduction to G.A.R. commanders, visited posts throughout the East and in several western states to explain the general's bill and distribute petitions.[27]

The net results of the claim-agent agitation abetted by Logan was a few scattered resolutions; in general, the Grand Army was indifferent to these propagandizing efforts. The changed attitude of headquarters under Logan's successor may have been largely responsible. Commander Burnside firmly believed that "the remainder of the public lands should be kept for actual settlers," and that "the small benefit that would be derived from such a bill would not compensate for the public harm." No department opposed this position; some expressed approval. The Massachusetts commander, advising members to ignore the blank petitions received for distribution, pointed out that they had arrived in the wrappers of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Yet the propaganda did have some effect. Eastern veterans organized several colonies to settle in Kansas and Colorado as soon as bounty legislation

[26] Madison *Soldiers' Record*, November 26, 1869, September 9, October 17, 1870, March 21, 28, June 20, August 8, 15, 22, 29, September 5, 26, October 3, 10, 26, 1871; April 8, June 4, 1872; Hibbard, *Public Land Policies*, 130; *Cong. Globe*, 42 Cong., 1 Sess., March 4–April 18, 1871, pp. 53, 77, 79, 177, 475, 732, 749, 750; New York *Tribune*, December 22, 1870, January 11, 17, 1871.

[27] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 101, 108, 139; *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 3 Sess., December 12, 1870, p. 65; New York *Tribune*, January 11, 17, March 24, 1871; H. G. Mair to Garfield, August 27, 1872, Garfield MSS.

should pass; Carl Schurz received a wire that over three hundred St. Louis soldiers had associated for settlement.[28]

A bill granting assignable land bounties twice passed the House but failed in the Senate. Logan, now a senator, recognized the strength of the sentiment that the public lands should be reserved for actual settlers and changed position. He supported a bill which deducted the veteran's term of service from the period necessary to perfect a homestead title but retained a minimum residence requirement of one year. In violent opposition Editor Martin redoubled his petition-circulating activities and boasted nearly two thousand signatures on land-warrant memorials. Delegates from various Grand Army posts gathered in Washington to denounce the occupancy requirement, but General Burnside gave the organization's official sanction to the measure. Favorable petitions poured in on Congress from over three hundred thousand veterans. The bill passed, and the reduced occupancy period drew former soldiers westward in large numbers. One senator stated that nearly five thousand veterans were organized and ready to start as soon as the bill became law. The press in general expressed relief that Congress had withstood the wiles of greedy claim agents.[29]

With an eye to gaining veterans' support for the coming campaign, congressmen urged various cash bounty–equalization bills

[28] *Journal First to Thirteenth Encampments, New Hampshire G.A.R.*, 29; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, 90, 113–14; memorial of Wisconsin G.A.R., July 26, 1871, in Madison *Soldiers' Record*, August 15, 1871; *Proceedings Annual Meetings Department Encampments of New Jersey* (1870 [5th Encampment]–1945), *8th Encampment* (1871), 9 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*); *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 108; *ibid.*, address at national encampment, May 8, 1872, p. 147; *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 1872, p. 81; New York *Tribune*, January 18, 1871; *Cong. Globe*, 42 Cong. 2 Sess., March 22, 1872, p. 1884; Charles Weddelstedt and eleven others, half-rate message, to Schurz and Blair, February 6, 1871, Schurz MSS.

[29] *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 3 Sess., January 31, 1871, p. 861; *ibid.*, 42 Cong., 2 Sess., March 22, 1872, pp. 1884, 1888, 2154; *ibid.*, 3 Sess., December 12, 1872, p. 167; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, February 20, April 2, 30, June 11, September 17, October 8, 22, November 5, 1872, April 3, 8, 22, May 13, July 1, 15, August 19, December 30, 1873; Garfield to John W. Frye, January 31, 1873, Garfield Letter Books; Chicago *Tribune*, May 9, 1872; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, address at national encampment, May 8, 1872, p. 147; Boston *Traveller*, quoted in New York *Evening Post*, May 8, 1872; Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage*, 216.

during 1872; but only one of these passed. The new law granted a bounty of $100 to those soldiers who had enlisted for three years before July 2, 1861, and who had been discharged without bounty before serving two years.[30]

Meanwhile the agents squeezed every possible gain from existing legislation. Often they arranged three-way conspiracies whereby they joined with examining surgeons and applicants to win fraudulent pensions. Early in 1872 the secretary of the interior admitted that one fourth of the pensions then being paid were illegal; General Garfield, repeating this statement to the House, estimated that $8,000,000 went out annually from the Treasury to undeserving pensioners. Despite mounting complaints, nothing was done to stop the drain.[31]

The approach of another presidential campaign stirred Republicans to think once more about veterans, but the spread of factional party disputes in the soldiers' organization threatened to block any hope for effective military demonstrations. Such sources as the *Soldiers' Record* encouraged an already-considerable anti-Grant feeling among veterans, condemning the administration's corruption and shouting for political reform. Some of Grant's enemies hoped to center soldier enthusiasm on a reform ticket with Hancock in first or second place; they also discussed Sherman, who steadfastly refused to stand for nomination.[32]

While the more realistic of the President's opponents submitted in the fear of splitting the party, some obstinately continued their opposition. H. A. Barnum, able member of the Republican veterans' executive committee and commander of the New York G.A.R. during 1871 and 1872, believed that a statement from a national soldiers' convention would force party leaders to select a candidate acceptable to the insurgents. Determined to wrest

[30] *Cong. Globe,* 42 Cong., 2 Sess., December 11, 1871–May 20, 1872, pp. 58, 195, 302, 394, 696, 2248, 3122, 3650, Appendix, 702; Madison *Soldiers' Record,* June 11, 1872.

[31] Oliver, *Civil War Pensions,* 40–41.

[32] Chicago *Tribune,* January 30, July 8, 1872; John H. Cheney to Schurz, April 29, 1871, Schurz MSS.; Samuel W. Kendal to *id.,* April 22, 1872, *ibid.;* Madison *Soldiers' Record,* January 18, March 12, 1872; New York *Soldier's Friend,* January 18, 1872; O. P. Fitzgerald to Trumbull, January 4, 1871, Trumbull MSS.; St. Louis *Republican,* quoted in Almira Hancock, *Reminiscences of Hancock,* 144; John M. Brown to Sherman, April 6, 1872, W. T. Sherman MSS.

control of the Republican veterans' organization from the regulars, he joined General Hugh J. Kilpatrick and W. F. Bartlett in addressing a circular letter to prominent soldiers. This letter, dated April 15, 1872, requested signatures to a call for a veterans' convention which would "call upon the Philadelphia Convention to nominate a candidate . . . other than Grant, and one that will unite the party and lead it on to victory." [33]

Replies were disappointing; it was too late to mend the party breach. Some agreed that a veterans' convention might work a miracle; but others, already pledged to insurgent leaders, believed that nothing could induce the Philadelphia convention to abandon Grant. They invited Barnum to lead his soldier-followers into the Liberal fold. "Your movement is too late to defeat the nomination of Grant," wrote one man. "The Republican party is already disintegrated, and I earnestly hope that the patriotic veterans . . . will be on hand at Cincinnati to enter their protest, not against Grant's renomination, but against his reelection." Kilpatrick and Bartlett joined the Cincinnati movement, while Barnum, crushed by the action of the Philadelphia convention, ceased his work as veterans' organizer.[34]

Any hope of drawing the mass of veterans to the Liberal Republican standard proved vain; the reformers were uninterested in bidding for the soldiers' vote. One former Grant enthusiast assured Carl Schurz that the volunteers, and especially the pensioners, were dissatisfied with the congressional majority and would gladly support the Liberal group if it "would work a little in their interests." The insertion of "a few words into the resolution of the Cincinnati Convention, as in regard to an 'increase of pensions' and 'bounty land,' would probably gain to your cause two or three hundred thousands [*sic*] votes." Editor S. W. Martin journeyed to Cincinnati and worked diligently for a resolution approving his pet project: a land bounty without residence re-

[33] New York *Tribune,* April 30, 1872; Barnum, J. Kilpatrick, and W. F. Bartlett to Gen. J. C. Caldwell, April 15, 1872, Trumbull MSS.; Barnum to editor, May 31, 1872, New York *Tribune,* June 3, 1872.

[34] Thomas W. Higginson to Barnum, April 20, 1872; Fitz Henry Warren to *id.*, May 6, 1872; Charles F. J. Lensbagh to *id.*, April 25, 1872; George W. Anderson and others, undated, to *id.*, published in New York *Tribune,* June 3, 1872; Barnum to editor, May 31, 1872, New York *Tribune,* June 3, 1872.

quirement. But the reformers could not be drawn from the rarified atmosphere of fine principles to the muddied paths of practical politics. The platform, after a brief expression of gratitude to soldiers, merely promised that "no act of ours shall ever detract from their justly earned fame." Such a vague gesture could scarcely be expected to attract either dissatisfied Republican veterans or claim agents. Martin announced that his paper would pursue an independent course during the campaign.[35]

Some of Hancock's friends pressed his cause for the Democratic nomination, but others vetoed the idea in the belief that the party's chance for victory was slim. Agreeing that his "time had not arrived," the general wrote "hundreds of letters" declining to enter the race. Democratic acceptance of the Liberal candidate, Horace Greeley, rendered it unlikely that any strong appeal would be made to the veterans' vote. A mere repetition of the mild Liberal promise in the Democratic platform was another indication that no special campaign appeal would be made to the volunteers as a group.[36]

Regular Republicans were more realistic; their platform announced that veterans' pensions and the care of their widows and orphans were the nation's sacred debt. Further, it promised bounty legislation "without regard to the length of service or the cause of . . . discharge." A national veterans' meeting, held simultaneously with the convention to endorse the nominees, appointed a committee to organize soldiers; and this council immediately began active work. General Burnside was chairman, while L. E. Dudley was secretary. Fairchild, Oglesby, Chipman, J. R. Hawley, and C. H. T. Collis, all prominent Grand Army leaders, also served on the committee.[37]

[35] P. Van Dell to Schurz, May 3, 1872, Schurz MSS.; R. K. Williams to *id.*, April 25, 1872, *ibid.;* Madison *Soldiers' Record,* May 14, 1872; New York *Tribune,* May 4, 1872; Democratic platform, *ibid.,* July 10, 1872.

[36] Almira Hancock, *Reminiscences of Hancock,* 144-45; George D. Ellis (comp.). *Platform of the Two Great Political Parties, 1856–1928, Inclusive,* U.S. Congress, under direction of William Tyler Page, clerk, House of Representatives, July, 1928 (Washington, 1928), 33.

[37] New York *Tribune,* June 7, 1872; Chicago *Tribune,* June 7, 1872; call for national veteran convention issued by Veterans' National Committee, July 5, 1872, in Madison *Soldiers' Record,* July 23, 1872; Samuel W. Curriden (comp.), *Our Soldiers and Sailors: What They Said and Did on the Anniversary of the Battle of Antietam at Pittsburgh, Penna., September 17 and 18, 1872* (pamphlet,

The council followed the procedure of the preceding presidential contest in encouraging the formation of clubs under the supervision of state committees. Chairman Burnside issued a circular to selected veterans in each state, urging them to organize former servicemen in every town. As in 1868 the council distributed a large amount of campaign literature to veterans, but it gave far less attention to the organization of local clubs and the staging of state conventions.[38]

The committee, again obsessed with Pennsylvania's importance, concentrated upon plans for a national soldiers' gathering in that state. This convention was to divide cheers between the presidential nominee and General J. F. Hartranft, Pennsylvania G.A.R. leader and gubernatorial candidate. Special efforts for the general seemed necessary to neutralize charges that as auditor general he had misused state funds. Recalling the national Republican committee's reluctance to part with funds in 1868, Pennsylvania workers asked the various state committees for money. When responses proved disappointing, they turned to the national committee with demands for $20,000, and then more modestly for $5,000. Upon being granted the latter sum, they persuaded the Pennsylvania committee to contribute an equal amount.[39]

Publication of the convention invitation over the G.A.R. commander's signature brought an immediate response from the Liberal and Democratic press, which had said nothing about soldiers up to this point. Burnside might plead technically that he had

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New York, 1872), 3; *National Veteran Club of the United States, Constitution and By-Laws* (pamphlet, Washington, 1881), 8.

[38] New York *Soldier's Friend*, September 4, 1869; Curriden (comp.), *Our Soldiers and Sailors*, 5; letter addressed to Wynkoop and Hallenbeck, 1872 (end of letter missing), W. E. Chandler MSS.; Kilburn Knox to Chandler, July 31, 1872, *ibid.;* John R. King to *id.*, October 24, 1872, *ibid.;* Dudley to Garfield, July 8, 1872, Garfield MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, June 7, 1872.

[39] Dudley to Fairchild, June 5, 1872, Fairchild MSS.; call issued by Veterans' National Committee, July 5, 1872, in Madison *Soldiers' Record*, July 23, 1872; invitation signed by Dudley, July 16, 1872, Fairchild MSS.; Edward F. Noyes to Fairchild, July 16, 1872, *ibid.;* Governor C. C. Carpenter to *id.*, July 13, 1872, *ibid.;* Dudley to *id.*, July 16, 1872, *ibid.;* Curriden (comp.), *Our Soldiers and Sailors*, 7; Hesseltine, *Ulysses S. Grant, Politician*, 285; Jacob Reese to Keyes, August 15, 1872, Keyes MSS.; *id.* to E. D. Morgan, August 23, 1872, W. E. Chandler MSS.; *id.* to Dudley, September 2, 1872, *ibid.;* Russell Errett to Chairman, Pennsylvania Republican Committee, September 7, 1872, *ibid.;* Reese to Dudley, September 9, 1872, *ibid.*

signed the invitation in a private capacity, stated the Chicago *Tribune*, "but this is a shallow device. It is, in fact, an attempt to use the Grand Army of the Republic as a political engine. Let this design be carried out and this organization will incur the fate of the Order of Cincinnati." These papers eagerly publicized statements of a few Liberal Republican Grand Army members who condemned Burnside for heading a campaign organization.[40]

When the convention opened on September 17, Pittsburgh was filled with expectant soldiers who had been tempted with half-rate tickets or free passes, free meals, and the prospect of a good time. For the speakers it was another fine opportunity to identify the Democratic party with the rebellion. Chairman Logan hoarsely shouted epithets above his cold, while Burnside, his formidable gray whiskers bristling, begged the delegates to refuse "support to men who believed that there was right in secession." General Butler fulminated about "vile and obscene" outrages in the South and exhorted soldiers to "stand by the country once again." The resolutions expressed appreciation for pension and bounty legislation, pledged support to Grant and Hartranft, and protested against transferring governmental control "to an unholy and corrupt coalition composed chiefly of elements but recently in open hostility" to it.[41]

As in 1868, Republicans took advantage of soldiers' monumental associations as well as of regimental and army reunions to recall war enthusiasm to the minds of both veterans and civilians. A Liberal Republican expressed anxiety about the Army of the Potomac's convention: "We ought to prevent this meeting being used in an unsound political direction." But it was difficult to combat the subtlety of Republican technique at these gatherings. One speaker at the Army of the Potomac convention sternly condemned the bloody-shirt wavers; others effectively revived wartime feelings. Republicans enjoyed General Hurlbut's address at the Army of the Tennessee reunion, but Greeley men were "dis-

[40] New York *Tribune*, June 3, July 10, August 21, 1872; call issued by Veterans' National Committee, July 5, 1872, in Madison *Soldiers' Record*, July 23, 1872; Dudley to Fairchild, July 16, 1872, Fairchild MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, July 12, 26, August 22, September 3, 1872; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, July 17, 1872.

[41] Curriden (comp.), *Our Soldiers and Sailors*, 32; Pittsburgh *Commercial*, September 18, 19, 1872; New York *Tribune*, September 18, 1872; circular, John A. Dix and others to Keyes, September 14, 1876, Keyes MSS.

pleased" with his allusions to their candidate. Speakers at the assembly of the Soldiers and Sailors of the Gulf expressed flattering praise for Grant.[42]

Again, as in 1868, the G.A.R. was kept in the background. Leaders, alarmed at the society's disintegration, took care "not to make the Grand Army . . . prominent during the campaign." Upon General Burnside's election as commander in 1871, he had promised that the society would be kept free from political intrigue and he continued to insist upon a nonpartisan position. His own words indicated that he was an advocate of the more subtle methods of inducing members to vote the Republican ticket. Addressing the national encampment in May, 1872, he fanned the dying embers of war hatred. The commander urged delegates to oppose any revival of the "secession heresy" and declared that he found it easier to forgive the defeated Confederates than the former northern Copperheads. "These men we necessarily hold in distrust, and they can never, for one moment, receive our sympathy or friendship." Many subordinate officers followed his lead, but others found it difficult to abandon the more outspoken habits of the society's earlier years.[43]

Pension agents also played a quiet role in the campaign. In Indiana it was charged that they carefully combed the state for applicants, warning that acceptance of the claims depended upon election results. Pension Bureau representatives were not above suspicion. The Philadelphia agent enclosed with pension payments a circular advertising two campaign documents endorsed by the city's Union League. This circular urged the pensioner "to do all in his power to sustain the present administration" and warned him of the "fearful risks of electing men whom he does not know."[44]

[42] New York *Tribune*, April 10, May 4, 8, October 18, 1872; August Willich to Barnum, April 22, 1872, *ibid.*, June 3, 1872; circular, Grand Soldiers' Meeting, May 3, 1872, Garfield MSS.; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, July 16, 1872; Earle Dudley Ross, *The Liberal Republican Movement* (New York, 1919), 173.

[43] *Proceedings 6th Encampment Vermont G.A.R.*, address of Wheelock G. Veazey, Commander, Vermont G.A.R., January 30, 1873, p. 8; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 134, 147; Chicago *Tribune*, May 9, 1872; Cincinnati *Commercial*, May 9, 1872; A. R. Calhoun to Chandler, August 10, 1872, W. E. Chandler MSS.

[44] Harrisburg *Patriot*, September 17, 20, 1872.

Greeley's campaign leaders made few efforts to organize veterans. In March a call appeared for a national convention to form a society opposed to the G.A.R., but the movement quietly died. During the summer the Democratic press announced the organization at St. Louis of "the Blues and the Greys," composed of Confederate as well as Union veterans. Members, working together "like brothers for a common cause," would typify the party's attitude toward the South; their campaign work would provide a "beautiful illustration of the 'dead past burying its dead.' " This society never achieved prominence.[45]

At an August meeting of Democratic veterans' leaders, a committee was appointed under General W. McCandless to plan a soldiers' convention that would counterbalance the Republican demonstration. But all these efforts on the part of veterans' leaders were stillborn because they were diametrically opposed to the policy of Greeley's workers. These leaders believed that if they kept veterans and their organizations in the foreground, they would—by reviving war memories and beclouding the real issues of the period—simply play into Republican hands. Moreover, any attempt to organize veterans under Greeley's leadership would only lay the party open to ridicule. Greeley possessed no characteristics upon which to center veterans' enthusiasm, while his personal conviction against emptying the Treasury to reward the nation's saviors had frequently been reflected in his *Tribune*.[46]

Instead of meeting Republicans on their own ground by planning counterdemonstrations, therefore, these leaders publicized the theory that veterans would best serve their own interests by losing their identity in the mass of the population. General St. Clair Mulholland reminded his comrades in arms: ". . . having laid aside our uniforms, we have become a part of the people; we are nothing more. . . ." "The best soldiers," remarked the New York *Tribune*, "are those who fight resolutely until the end of the war and then betake themselves resolutely to the pur-

[45] Madison *Soldiers' Record*, April 2, 30, 1872; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, July 23, 1872.

[46] New York *Tribune*, August 17, 1872; Chicago *Tribune*, August 29, 1872; Harrisburg *Patriot*, August 28, 29, 1872; New York *Sun*, August 27, 29, 1872; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, September 17, 1872; Mair to Garfield, August 27, 1872, Garfield MSS.; Garfield to Mair, September 14, 1872, Garfield Letter Books.

suits of peace. . . . no soldier can regard with anything but contempt the efforts of demagogues to herd them by banners and catch-words, and drive them solid to the polls." The Chicago *Tribune* believed that "the people have had enough of war. . . . It is time that a candidate for office should have some other recommendation than a mere ability to manage armies and fight battles." Veterans were none too eager to accept this view; one Republican reported to Fairchild, "The opposition are helping us by saying that 'soldiers are well enough in time of war, but of little use in time of peace.' " [47]

Occasionally the Democratic press departed from the policy of ignoring soldiers as a special group in order to refute exaggerated Republican claims. The New York *Sun*, for example, suggested that soldiers had not fared so well under Republican administrations. In Pennsylvania the Democratic press publicized the Republican gubernatorial candidate's opposition to land bounties at the G.A.R. encampment, necessitating hurried and emphatic Republican defense. The New York *Tribune*, concentrating its attack on Henry Wilson, Republican vice-presidential candidate, termed his boast of championing veterans' interests in his capacity as chairman of the Senate Military Committee "sheer hypocrisy." [48]

Throughout the campaign Horace Greeley avoided any mention of veterans except in his speech at Harrisburg, soon after the Republican soldiers' convention. On this occasion he could not resist condemning the men who had gathered "at a vast expense with the single purpose of rekindling the bitterness . . . of civil war for the advantage of a political party." Administration papers immediately expressed indignation, while General Burnside issued an angry address to soldiers charging the Democratic candidate with lack of courtesy toward the nation's heroes. The incident, he declared, confirmed his opinion that Greeley was

[47] Harrisburg *Patriot*, August 29, 1872; New York *Tribune*, August 21, 1872; Chicago *Tribune*, September 21, 1872; Noyes to Fairchild, July 16, 1872, Fairchild MSS.

[48] New York *Sun*, August 27, 29, 1872; Pittsburgh *Commercial*, September 16, 1872; Harrisburg *Patriot*, August 29, 1872; New York *Tribune*, October 4, 1872; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, August 16, September 19, 1872.

"unfit to be trusted in any position where loyalty to Government . . . is required."

While Democratic journals were furiously attacking this address, General H. W. Slocum, chairman of the Democratic National Executive Committee, replied to Burnside in a scathing open letter. Scornfully inquiring if anything in Burnside's military career justified his presuming to instruct veterans, Slocum emphasized his party's campaign position: "When at the close of the war we laid down our arms we became citizens, and we have no interests to-day except those we have in common with other citizens. Why, then should anyone ask us . . . to assemble in political bodies . . . unless it is with the hope that from your former connection with us in the army you may be able to influence our judgments upon matters of public policy in a time of peace." Such partisan soldiers' assemblies, he asserted, had become "slightly nauseating" to the public.[49]

Since—with the exception of this angry flurry at the close of the campaign—Democrats almost ignored the soldiers, Republicans saw little need for strenuous exertions. Veterans' organizations and propaganda, therefore, played no prominent part in the campaign. Apparently Republicans regarded their Pittsburgh convention and their platform promise for bounty equalization sufficient to hold the soldiers. Probably they were right. Hartranft's victory in Pennsylvania forecast the nation's decision. The unfortunate choice of candidate by Democrats and Liberals may have been sufficient cause in itself for defeat; in any case, the veterans' vote was undoubtedly a contributing factor. One former soldier later declared: ". . . it is a fact . . . that it was the 600,000 soldiers votes of 1872 that elected Grant. Our great national reunion at Pittsburgh . . . settled the question. . . . Do you know why? There was a resolution in the Philadelphia platform pledging the Republican party to equalize bounties."[50]

[49] Greeley's speech, Harrisburg *Patriot*, September 21, 1872; Slocum's remarks thereon, *ibid.*, October 1, 1872; Slocum's letter to Burnside and editorial remarks, New York *Tribune*, October 5, 1872, Chicago *Tribune*, October 10, 1872, Indianapolis *Sentinel*, October 9, 1872, Harrisburg *Patriot*, October 11, 1872.

[50] Quoted in Madison *Soldiers' Record*, March, 1876; *ibid.*, September 17, 1872; Ross, *Liberal Republican Movement*, 184–90.

Meanwhile the Grand Army was slowly rebuilding on the basis of apparent nonpartisanship. It was a difficult struggle, but General Burnside's constant warnings against open political activity were gradually producing results. Early in 1872 the New York commander wrote: ". . . he . . . has given the order a *non partisan* reputation. He has systematized the business of Headquarters and lifted us out of debt and put over $1000 in the treasury. . . ." That year the inspector general reported: ". . . the prejudice created against us is gradually dying away. . . ," while Burnside boasted that during the campaign only one post had disregarded the ban on politics. The circumspectness of all the other posts had, he felt, "unquestionably increased the public confidence in the order, given it increased influence, and strengthened it internally." In 1873 the New York encampment applauded the announcement that the society was "completely established in the good opinion of all the people. . . . We are neither partisan nor sectarian." Robert Beath complained, however, that newspapers, "friendly or otherwise," harped on the activities and views of those "who may have political ambitions to satisfy, and who are members of the Grand Army. For these things we are unjustly held responsible." [51]

In the East the society was slowly gathering strength: Massachusetts attained a membership of 11,616, New York claimed 1,662, and Connecticut boasted 1,210 members. New Jersey, with a roll of 1,282, announced that its posts were in the most flourishing condition since their organization. These totals were low, but they indicated actual membership, for a new rule required posts to drop members one year in arrears. National officers gave no report on membership for the society as a whole in this period, perhaps because the figure would be a discouraging contrast with those of previous years. In 1872 the Grand Army was at least holding its own; during the first three quarters it lost 5,359 members and gained 5,610 recruits.[52]

[51] Barnum to Fairchild, February 4, 1872, Fairchild MSS.; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 170, 208, 211; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1873, p. 56.

[52] *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 146; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1873, p. 72; *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*, 1873, pp. 27, 29; *Connecticut G.A.R. Proceedings 1867–1881*, 1873, p. 20; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 120, 151, 210–11.

But officers still complained of the soldiers' apathy, which at times they blamed on the depression and at times on the inevitable indifference during heated campaigns to a nonpartisan society. The adjutant general reported that the campaign of 1872 "interfered seriously with the work of organizing. . . . It was thought best to allow matters to remain *in statu quo* rather than risk any repetition of the story of politics and the Grand Army. . . ." [53] Leaders cast about for means of stimulating the soldiers' interest in organization. One of these was the promotion of state homes for the disabled and for orphans, which during the 1870's became the Grand Army's principal interest.

In 1865 the federal as well as state governments had realized the necessity of caring for the disabled, and on March 3 Congress had incorporated a national asylum. A new act the following year created a board to procure sites and erect buildings, and to regulate the asylum's business and government. This board met on May 16, 1866, and elected as its president the ubiquitous General Butler.[54]

The energetic general immediately began the purchase of sites, and by the end of 1867 the board reported that its three homes—at Dayton, Ohio; Augusta, Maine; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin—were in flourishing condition. Butler announced that the various branches were housing 3,802 soldiers and were adequate to care for all the nation's disabled; none need become dependent upon charity or seek state aid. Under various acts and joint resolutions, Congress had by 1870 appropriated $4,684,235.65 for the asylums. The wily Butler managed to get this sum so entangled with his own funds that an investigating committee was baffled in its efforts to discover to what extent if any he was guilty of mis-

[53] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 11; *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 106; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, Pt. 2, p. 18; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 1875, p. 103.

[54] *Cong. Globe*, 38 Cong., 2 Sess., March 3, 1865, January 15, 1866, 233, Appendix, 141; *ibid.*, 40 Cong., 1 Sess., March 8, 1867, p. 28; "Meeting of the Corporators of the National Military and Naval Asylum," Washington, D.C., March 14, 1865, Butler MSS.; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, January 24, 1865; Chicago *Tribune*, October 24, 1865; New York *Journal of Commerce*, November 8, 1866; New York *Herald*, January 16, March 20, April 11, December 17, 25, 1864, January 16, March 20, April 11, 1866; New York *Tribune*, May 17, 1866; Philadelphia *Inquirer*, January 17, 1866; Gustavus Adolphus Weber and Laurence F. Schmeckebier, *The Veterans' Administration, Its History, Activities, and Organization* (Washington, D.C., 1934), 210.

management. Congress also incorporated a home for soldiers' orphans, and a similar institution at Gettysburg derived its sole support from Sunday schools.[55]

The Grand Army regarded these provisions as inadequate, and throughout the 1870's it agitated for state aid. During 1865 state legislatures had discussed care for the wounded; New York, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana were among those which took early steps to establish institutions. Several states, led by Pennsylvania, also founded homes for soldiers' orphans. In general, at first, the G.A.R. displayed little interest in either type of institution, but there were exceptions. Iowa posts raised funds to support a state orphans' home when legislative appropriations proved inadequate, while the Ohio Department established an orphanage for which it solicited subscriptions from the public.[56]

Late in 1868 Commander Logan asked each department to report on its progress in establishing state homes for soldiers' orphans, as well as on the extent of the Grand Army's participation. The following year the national encampment resolved that the society's mission would be unfulfilled until all veterans' children had been "properly educated and cared for by the country." In

[55] Madison *Wisconsin Daily State Journal*, June 1, 1866, October 12, 1868; *Cong. Globe*, 39 Cong., 2 Sess., January 30, 1867, p. 867; *ibid.*, 40 Cong., 1 Sess., March 8, 20, 1867, pp. 28, 37, 430, 462; *ibid.*, 2 Sess., March 6, 1868, pp. 1683, 1696, 1758; *ibid.*, 3 Sess., December 10, 1868, pp. 47, 64; *ibid.*, 41 Cong. 3 Sess., March 3, 1871, Appendix, 280, 281–84; *ibid.*, 42 Cong., 2 Sess., March 18, 1872, p. 1773; New York *Tribune*, April 13, June 7, November 21, December 7, 1867, March 3, 1869, March 21, June 27, December 26, 1870, January 7, February 3, 1871, June 2, September 4, 1880; clipping from Cincinnati *Inquirer*, March 3, 1880, Butler MSS.; W. B. Franklin to Butler, November 30, 1880, *ibid.*; Washington *National Tribune*, December 9, 1886; New York *Soldier's Friend*, March 11, 1870; C. S. Armstrong to Garfield, March 1, 1872, Garfield MSS.; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, March, 1876; George F. Hoar, *Autobiography of Seventy Years* (New York, 1903), 2 vols., I, 344; Washington *Great Republic*, January 17, 1867; Mrs. J. Carlisle to Mrs. Lucius Fairchild, March 10, 1866, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, May 19, 1866, *ibid.*

[56] Indianapolis *Journal*, July 3, 1863, May 3, June 10, 1867; Chicago *Tribune*, July 22, August 3, 11, 19, 21, 30, September 1, 7, 11 29, 1865, February 3, 1872; New York *Tribune*, May 8, 1865, April 16, 1877; New York *Herald*, February 27, 1866; Cincinnati *Commercial*, May 22, 1865, May 18, December 27, 1866; Washington *Great Republic*, January 17, February 14, 1867; New York *Soldier's Friend*, June, 1866, April, August, September, 1867 (monthly issues), February 6, 1869; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, January 28, 1865; Indianapolis *Journal*, June 10, 1867; St. Louis *Dispatch*, August 7, 1866; Indianapolis *Herald*, December 11, 1865; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 1869, pp. 29, 30, 33; *ibid.*, semi-annual meeting, July 21, 1870, pp. 49, 58; McClure, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, 246–47.

1870 and again in 1871 the encampment instructed departments and posts to urge legislation providing for soldiers' orphans, while in 1872 it requested members to inaugurate campaigns for orphanages in those states which had none. At the national encampment of 1873 the adjutant general reviewed the state provisions for institutional care of soldiers' orphans and the disabled.[57]

Thus encouraged, many departments campaigned for legislative appropriations. The California Grand Army urged Congress to establish a federal home for the disabled on the Pacific Coast, while other departments concentrated on state legislatures. Through the 1870's they lobbied; when they won bills incorporating the institutions, they demanded increased appropriations. Directing boards usually included Grand Army men, and G.A.R. committees inspected the homes annually in order to report to department encampments.[58]

Another major Grand Army project during the 1870's was the society's steadily increasing charitable activity; leaders often cited this as proof of benevolent, rather than political, intentions. During 1867, 1868, and 1869, posts frequently sponsored fairs, carnivals, and concerts to raise funds for indigent veterans or their families. As this charitable work became more extensive, both posts and departments expanded their relief funds. Sometimes members gave country-wide response to posts suffering calamities; after the Chicago fire of 1872, they sent $1,422.85 to their Chicago comrades. In 1874 the adjutant general reported that expenditures for charity during the year totaled $45,570.82.[59]

[57] "General Order No. 15," in New York *Soldier's Friend*, November 7, November, 1868, July, 1869 (monthly issues); *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 73, 101, 119, 139, 147, 198, 231–34.

[58] New York *Tribune*, March 22, 1877; *California G.A.R. Proceedings 1867–1882*, 61; *Proceedings 7th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 4; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R., Semi-Annual Encampment*, July, 1870, pp. 14–19; *ibid., Semi-Annual Encampment*, July, 1872, p. 9; *ibid.*, 1874, p. 83; *Proceedings 12th Encampment Vermont G.A.R.*, 12; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. First Fourteen Years*, 34, 43, 60, 65, 73, 155; *Maine G.A.R. Proceedings, 1867–1877*, 1874, p. 18; *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*, 1870, p. 21; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Virginia* (1874 [3rd Encampment]–1904), *3rd Encampment*, 4 (hereinafter cited as *Proceedings Encampments Virginia G.A.R.*); *Early History Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 250; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, 43, 81, 87; *Journal First to Thirteenth Encampments New Hampshire G.A.R.*, 1878, p. 120.

[59] New York *Soldier's Friend*, February, 1867, March, 1868 (monthly issues), January 23, 1869; Washington *Great Republic*, February 7, 14, 1867; *Proceedings*

Leaders repeatedly urged posts to sponsor various kinds of social functions in order to stimulate veterans' interest in the society. Burnside recommended "literary and social entertainments" as "pecuniarily successful" as well as "highly beneficial to our organization in other respects." Posts sponsored excursions and picnics, and many departments held semiannual summer encampments which were almost purely social. Vermont posts "adopted the practice of getting up theatricals," while many posts in Ohio sponsored lectures, recitals, plays, and concerts as means of attracting recruits. One observer remarked that the society was "resolving itself into a vast lyceum organization." [60]

Campfires, at which members sang, exchanged wartime experiences, and enjoyed refreshments, became popular. General Sherman described them as "an assemblage of comrades on an equal footing, regardless of former rank, yet subject to self imposed discipline; the comrades may be seated round their hall or at tables, with the simplest and cheapest fare, when they sing their old war songs, tell their old war stories, or in the soldiers phrase 'swap lies,' and transact their business of 'charity.' " The Massachusetts Department found that the campfires filled "a want long felt"; Vermont posts believed them of "great benefit," while the Illinois commander reported that they had "a good effect in strengthening posts numerically." In 1875 the national adjutant general reported that in many departments the campfire had proved "a most potent means of creating renewed interest among the soldiers." [61]

All these activities helped the society struggle through a difficult period. Many veterans apparently looked forward especially

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Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872, 115; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1873, p. 72; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 152, 279, 322, 325–26.

[60] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, May 10, 11, 1871, p. 124; *Proceedings 6th Encampment Vermont G.A.R.*, 9; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R., 7th Encampment*, 77–80; New York *Times*, January 25, 1877; "E.P.R.," "The Grand Army of the Republic and Culture," in New York *Soldier's Friend*, January 23, 1869.

[61] William T. Sherman, "Camp-Fires of the G.A.R.," in *North American Review*, CXLVII (November, 1888), 498; *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 1872, p. 89; *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*, 1873, p. 37; *Proceedings 7th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 15; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 332.

to the campfires, when they could renew old army ties and relive the scenes burned so deeply on their memories. Undoubtedly, too, they enjoyed the opportunity for self-expression furnished by the songs, stories, recitations, and snatches of drama which accompanied the usual campfire program.

Officers did not overlook more direct means of encouraging membership. Many department headquarters offered prizes to the posts most successful in gaining recruits. When Charles Devens of Massachusetts was elected commander in chief, he wrote to prominent soldiers, many of them former members, urging the revival of dormant posts and the organization of new ones. Although he had to admit in 1874 that membership differed little from the preceding year, he persevered after re-election, as did the department officers. In 1875, Devens reported important gains in Massachusetts and New York and slight increases in the West. The following year Commander J. F. Hartranft announced that despite the "general prostration of business . . . the prosperity of the Order has been marked and encouraging. . . ." Yet the persistent efforts of national headquarters to reorganize in the West produced discouragingly slow results. Leaders succeeded in establishing posts in Michigan, but their efforts in Indiana and Ohio were unavailing.[62]

In their search for devices to attract former soldiers, Grand Army officers remained indifferent to the possibilities of a campaign for favorable veterans' legislation; they refused to support the demands of pension agents. Occasionally, to be sure, a department encampment urged bounty or pension legislation on Congress, and the national encampments usually made polite requests. In 1871 the assembly requested extension of the bounty law. In his address to the encampment the following year Commander in Chief Burnside suggested that if "the efforts of comrades could be concentrated on some well considered plan to secure liberal provision for those whose disability entitles them to it, something nearer justice could be secured." This encampment appointed a "committee on legislation," which recommended passage of a

[62] *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*, 1873, p. 38; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 271–72, 278, 327, 383, 385; George A. Hanaford to Fairchild, September 2, 1874, Fairchild MSS.; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R. Encampments First Fourteen Years*, 111.

House bounty bill, as well as a proposition to increase pensions for the permanently disabled. The delegates adopted this report without debate. The following year the encampment suggested that Congress give "final settlement" to the bounty-equalization question and instructed its commander to continue urging pension increase for those who had lost limbs. The encampment of 1876 merely requested a change in bounty legislation favoring volunteers who became commissioned officers. Although the Grand Army took an official position favoring bounty and pension legislation, it did not agitate the matter. And in any case its numerical strength was scarcely sufficient to impress congressmen.[63]

Whether or not political motives prompted G.A.R. leaders to continue sponsorship of Memorial Day services, their policy was undoubtedly a contributing factor to the society's gradual reestablishment in public esteem. Civilians came to regard with affection and pride the annual processions and ceremonies with which members reverently paid tribute to their fallen comrades. The compiler of ceremony records for 1869 commented, "If expression of popular feeling in 1868 was grand and imposing . . . the manifestations in 1869 assumed still greater proportions." He estimated that fully four times as many civilians participated. Chipman reported to Logan that "no one act" of his administration had done more to remove public prejudice against the society than the inauguration of the services. By 1872 it seemed clear that the anniversary had become a "permanent festival . . . for the nation." In New York City the ceremonies and address at the Metropolitan Opera House following the parade became an annual institution.[64]

Sometimes bitterness marred the services when Grand Army

[63] *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R., Semi-Annual Encampment,* 1872, p. 41; *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.,* 1873, pp. 24, 34, 36; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872,* 31; *Proceedings Connecticut G.A.R. Encampments, 1867–1881,* 24; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.,* 141, 147, 198–99, 302, 352, 356, 413.

[64] E. F. M. Faehtz (comp.), *The National Memorial Day: A Record of Ceremonies Over the Graves of Union Soldiers, May 29 and 30, 1869* (Washington, D.C., 1870), Introduction and 336; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.,* 47; New York *Tribune,* May 26, 28, 29, 31, 1869, May 3, 31, 1870, May 31, 1871, May 30, 1872, June 1, 1874, June 1, 1875; New York *Soldier's Friend,* June 5, 1869; New York *Herald,* May 30, 1869; Chicago *Tribune,* June 1, 1872.

men objected to an impartial distribution of flowers over the graves of Confederate as well as Union dead. This occurred in 1869 at Arlington. A G.A.R. committee placed guards around Confederate graves to forbid decoration; the incident created so much unfavorable comment that national headquarters issued an official explanation. The committee's action indicated no hatred for the occupants of the graves, the Grand Army announced, but rather "undying hostility" to the ideas for which they died: ". . . we will never consent by public tribute to obliterate the wide gulf. . . . To do less than keep this distinction fresh in the national mind is to undermine the republic itself." The 1874 encampment debated a resolution prohibiting departments and posts from "committing the Grand Army through the public press or otherwise" to the decoration of Confederate graves. The resolutions committee commented that this open declaration was unnecessary since the regulations provided for commemoration of Union dead only. After some discussion the delegates accepted the committee's decision.[65]

This feeling continued to crop out from time to time; the ceremonies of 1876 provided several instances. Madison, Wisconsin, members grumbled that the inclusion of Confederate graves in their services destroyed the "special significance of the ceremony as inaugurated to honor loyalty to the nation." An Illinois Democrat's open letter charging that the Grand Army neglected Confederate graves drew vehement denials from newspapers and evoked from a post commander the assertion that "we cannot, must not, respect [the Confederates'] treason. . . . treason is odious and not respectable." [66]

Speakers were sometimes obvious in prostituting the ceremonies to political ends, while the prominent participation of Republican soldier-politicians like General Sickles made Democrats uneasy. One paper complained, "Evil designing political men are seeking to make this day a source of political profit to them selves," while another expressed the suspicion that "small politicians" were using the day "to serve their own paltry purposes." Democrats were

[65] New York *Herald*, May 30, 31, 1869; official explanation, W. T. Collins, June 2, 1869, in Madison *Soldiers' Record*, June 9, 1869; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 296, 300–302.

[66] Chicago *Tribune*, May 31, 1876.

not slow to recognize and denounce such motives, while the Washington *Post* complained, "We do not think the dead are honored, and we are sure the living are not benefited, by raising political battle-cries over . . . moldering bones. . . . This annual howl of the demagogue over the soldiers' graves had better be suppressed. A healthy public opinion should condemn it in all sections. . . ." A political faction supporting the Indiana Democrats tried to halt memorial services in its vicinity on the ground that they perpetuated wartime emotions. Similar suspicions were partly responsible for opposition to a bill making May 30 a national holiday, which passed the House only to meet defeat in the Senate.[67]

Probably the public was seldom aware of these undercurrents. Speakers who expressed partisan ideas in their orations did so very subtly, while those who spoke sincerely, without ulterior motive, were legion. By the middle of the 1870's, the latter group was welcomed by those G.A.R. leaders who were particularly eager to keep the society's nonpartisan façade in good repair.[68]

While the G.A.R. gave every appearance of steering a middle course between the two parties, its officers were proclaiming to members ideologies which later would have indirect but powerful effects. From the end of the war Republican soldiers' leaders had expressed jingoistic sentiments, and veterans' periodicals advocated an aggressive foreign policy. In Grand Army circles, Spain was the country most often attacked. The New York encampment decided against an official expression of sympathy with the Cuban revolutionary army only through fear of embarrassing Department Commander Daniel E. Sickles, "in his diplomatic mission in Spain." During the 1870's occasional imperialistic resolutions emanated from posts and departments.[69]

More important than the dissemination of this nationalistic spirit

[67] Madison *Soldiers' Record*, June 10, 1873; New York *Tribune*, May 26, 1869, May 11, 24, 1870, May 31, 1875; New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 5, 1869; Washington *National Tribune*, June, 1881, May 6, 13, 27, 1882; Washington *Post*, July 18, 1879, quoted in Washington *National Tribune*, July, 1879; Patterson McNutt to Thomas Hanna, February 16, 1883, Benjamin Harrison MSS. (1855–1901), Library of Congress; Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, May 31, 1876.

[68] Chicago *Tribune*, May 31, 1876.

[69] New York *Soldier's Friend*, July 31, 1869; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, December 31, 1869, February 18, 1870; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R., 1867–1872*, 48, 70; *Proceedings Encampments Virginia G.A.R., 8th Encampment*, 6.

was the development among members of a conservative economic philosophy. According to the rules and regulations, one of the society's paramount objects was the maintenance of "true allegiance" to the United States, based upon fidelity to the national Constitution and laws and "manifested by the discountenancing of whatever may tend to weaken loyalty, incite to insurrection, treason, or rebellion, or in any manner impair the efficiency and permanency of our free institutions. . . ." [70] So far as Grand Army leaders were concerned, any aggressive attempt on the part of workers to obtain higher wages or improved conditions of labor was to be included among the forces that tended to "weaken loyalty" and "incite to insurrection."

The changing policy of veterans' newspapers reveals the development of this attitude. During the first few months after the war, the *Soldier's Friend* proclaimed itself the workingman's champion. In 1868 the *Great Republic* published several editorials favoring the "National Cheap-Freight Railway League." But these papers soon turned from championship to denunciation of working-class activities. By 1869 the *Soldier's Friend* was proclaiming its hostility to the development of labor unions.[71]

Republicans repeatedly informed the veteran, sometimes delicately and sometimes in bald terms, that his bounty and political office came as a gift from them. They believed it only reasonable to expect him in return to support the economic status quo, whatever his own financial position. Speakers rendered this bargain less obvious by covering it with the mantle of patriotic duty. It was as noble and necessary, they asserted, to preserve law and order against the aggressions of dissatisfied workers as it had been to preserve the Union against the treasonable designs of Confederates.

Grand Army policy followed this theory. During the labor troubles of 1877 the society's officers successfully used it to inspire veterans to offer assistance in suppressing strikes, and many posts volunteered such aid to state authorities. New York's commander, the legless James Tanner, offered his governor the department's services, while Commander in Chief John C. Robinson

[70] New York *Soldier's Friend*, July (monthly issue), 1865; Rules and Regulations, Article II, *ibid.*, June 27, 1868; Washington *Great Republic*, July 19, 1866.

[71] New York *Soldier's Friend*, August 28, 1869.

wired to the President, "The Grand Army of the Republic . . . can if necessary furnish thousands of volunteers for the restoration and preservation of order." Although the President did not accept this offer, state authorities in a few cases did use the proffered assistance of posts. "All over the land," said Tanner, "was witnessed the spectacle of men, to whom the handling of arms for twelve years had been a memory of the past, springing into the breach and holding at bay the aroused, unreasoning physical forces of our land." The commander in chief later commended the members for their readiness to "take up arms in the cause of law and order," and boasted, "The knowledge that a strong organization of tried veteran soldiers stood ready to resume their arms to enforce obedience to the laws, did much to restore order and insure quiet to the disturbed districts." [72]

During the 1870's, when the Grand Army was struggling for existence, the influence of such propaganda was comparatively unimportant. But in succeeding years, when local and national officers of a rapidly expanding society enthusiastically proclaimed the conservative ideology, its effect would be far-reaching.

[72] *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1878, address of James Tanner, New York Commander, to department encampment, January 23, 1878, p. 20; *Proceedings 12th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1878, Robinson's address to National G.A.R. Encampment, June 4, 1878, p. 522.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Reawakening

WIDESPREAD DEMOCRATIC VICTORIES in the 1874 elections caused chastened Republicans to ponder means of stemming the tide of discontent before it swept them from control of the national administration. One obvious sore spot was the veterans' dissatisfaction with the party's failure to keep its platform promise of 1872. Early in 1875, therefore, the question of cash-bounty equalization became prominent, and in February the House passed a bill granting eight and one-third dollars for each month of service. In the Senate Logan championed the bill and threatened to introduce it every morning until his colleagues gave it attention. The New York *Tribune* publicized a veteran's scorn for the general who believed that the soldiers' votes "could all be secured for the Republican party by paying them $50 or $100 apiece . . ." and for his party associates who supported him because "wild with alarm at the prospect of losing their seats." Logan, impervious to condemnation, said that he wanted to be able to tell veterans that "the same enemies they had during the war are their enemies, and that their friends during the war are their friends now." The bill squeezed through the Senate with a one-vote margin; its estimated cost was $30,000,000.[1]

But Logan reckoned without the President, who was irritated by the nagging importunities of the claim agents. In his veto message Grant pointed to the condition of the country's finances and remarked that the bill was "inconsistent with the measures now demanded." Moreover, he did not believe "that any con-

[1] *Cong. Record,* 43 Cong., 2 Sess., February 13, March 2, 3, 1875, pp. 1256–65, 2046, 2049, 2050, 2205, 2235, 2264, 2265; Botsford to Garfield, February 28, 1873, Garfield MSS.; "A Soldier's Indignant Protest," letter to editor, March 5, 1875, New York *Tribune,* March 9, 1875.

siderable portion of the ex-soldiers" desired the measure; rather it was an act "for the relief of claim agents and middle men who shall intervene to collect or discount the bounties." The Democratic press rejoiced, and thanked Grant for blocking a raid on the Treasury. The New York *Tribune* asserted that Logan, realizing that soldiers were tiring of his party, offered the bill as a "sop to them; in plain English . . . a bribe." Republicans needed to conciliate veterans, while Democrats feared to give them offense. "So in they went all of them to buy votes at the expense of millions." [2]

The last-moment withdrawal of the gift enraged former soldiers, and they showered Congress with petitions. When that body reconvened, Republicans hastened to introduce a number of bounty bills. Logan championed one of these, again promising to propose it daily. A soldier warned General Garfield, "The soldiers are not very clamorous, but they watch closely, and when the time comes will make their power felt." But the agitation of soldiers, agents, and the persistent Logan were unavailing; no bill passed either house.[3]

With occasional exceptions, Republicans neglected the bloody shirt during Grant's second term. This may have resulted partly from the influence of the defeated but still discontented reformers, who fervently wished to bury the war in order to focus attention upon immediate issues. In any case the public, weary of the partisan excesses of Reconstruction, began to regard the South with sympathy; and veterans, no longer aroused by politicians, grew less bitter. In 1875, for the first time, former soldiers from both armies gathered together at the Bunker Hill celebration. At a reunion of Vermont veterans in August, Vice-President Henry Wilson begged, "Let us turn the past over to the historian. . . . We can afford to be generous. . . . It is . . . our duty to do all we can to bring about a complete unity of feeling. . . ." In September

[2] New York *Tribune*, March 5, 6, 1875; Richardson (ed.), *Compilation of Messages and Papers of Presidents*, VII, 320; Dalzell to Cleveland [undated], 1885, Cleveland MSS.

[3] *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., December 14, 1875–August 11, 1876, pp. 212, 376, 1202, 1387, 1638, 1983, 3932–40, 4468, 4514, 4852, 5434–35; J. H. Knight to Garfield, February 18, 1876, Garfield MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, August 12, 1876.

an Ohio reunion listened sympathetically to an address from a Confederate general.[4]

But within a few months all was changed. Early in 1876 James G. Blaine, watchful for opportunities to expand his presidential boom, arose in the House to insist that Jefferson Davis be excluded from the provisions of the amnesty. This bill would have restored the civil rights of all southerners still under the ban of the Fourteenth Amendment. In "one of the most terrible philippics" ever delivered in Congress, Blaine cleverly focused attention on Davis, declaring him guilty of murdering Union prisoners at Andersonville Prison. The terrible picture he presented of these soldiers' suffering brought a deathly silence to the House and immediately revived the flagging hatreds of the war years. At first Blaine's colleagues had misgivings; but as the Democrats became enmeshed in a damaging and embarrassing debate, Republicans realized that charges of corruption might be drowned with the old battle cry. Garfield, seizing Blaine's cue, charged that Davis had personal knowledge of the "nameless crimes" at Andersonville but did nothing to halt them. He repeated the details "of the sickening story in a tragic, pathetic way that was painful to hear." [5]

As far as Blaine's career was concerned, his speech proved a boomerang. It focused Democratic hatred upon him, and soon a Democratic-controlled committee uncovered the notorious "Mulligan letters." The resulting scandal rendered it impossible for Blaine to win the support of the Republican reformers to his candidacy. But Blaine's party could rejoice at his action. As northern newspapers headlined his words, the public became inflamed once more with wartime passions. Veterans especially were aroused; survivors of southern prisons penned burning letters for newspaper publication. The Chicago *Tribune* reported that many Indiana soldiers, heretofore Democratic, had been "awakened" by the speech, and were organizing to defeat the party of treason. One soldier wrote to Garfield: ". . . during the amnesty debate, I felt the old spirit stirring strongly, and I am not the only one

[4] Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 121, 257; New York *Tribune*, August 19, September 7, 1875; New York *Times*, December 21, 1876.

[5] David Saville Muzzey, *James G. Blaine, A Political Idol of Other Days* (New York, 1934), 76–83; Chicago *Tribune*, January 11, 12, 13, February 24, 1876.

who felt so. . . . Thank God! When the time comes, that a greyback is accorded the same honors with a blue, I trust I shall have gone hence." The tune for the Republican campaign song of 1876 had been struck; it was a tune for which veterans would be needed to impart the necessary martial swing.[6]

Republicans apparently believed that with this issue their war record would be sufficient to hold the soldiers. Their platform merely promised that the nation's pledges to its saviors must be fulfilled. But soldier-politicians played a prominent part in the convention proceedings. General Hartranft, G.A.R. commander in chief, received consideration for first place, while Logan's popularity with the volunteers gave him prominence as a possible vice-presidential candidate. The New York *Herald* believed that his nomination "would summon all the war feeling which is believed to be yet so potent an element in the politics of this country." As for the first place on the ticket, Hayes' military record undoubtedly contributed to his success, but it was not so important a factor as his acceptability to the still-aggressive reform faction. His bloody-shirt speeches to Ohio soldiers were unknown to the reformers and therefore did not injure his cause.[7]

The nomination of Hayes led many Democrats to conclude that Hancock would be the wisest choice for them. They argued that the party could defeat a Republican soldier only with a candidate who could also attract the veterans' vote and who could present a record of full co-operation with the Union cause throughout the war. Democrats suspected that Hancock was the only man whom the Republicans feared. The general, too, was particularly popular with southerners. Representative William B. Spencer from Louisiana remarked that Hayes's nomination left Democrats with no alternative but to settle upon the general, while a Mississippi representative asserted, "Nominate Hancock, and the bloody shirt will be folded away." [8]

[6] Eckenrode, *Hayes*, 117–21; Knight to Garfield, February 18, 1876, Garfield MSS.

[7] New York *Herald*, June 14, 15 (Cincinnati editions), 16, 1876; Chicago *Tribune*, June 15, 1876; Schurz to Horace White, undated [probably about November 15, 1872], in Frederick Bancroft (ed.), *Speeches, Correspondence, and Political Papers of Carl Schurz* (New York, 1913), 6 vols., II, 445; Eckenrode, *Hayes*, 132.

[8] Chicago *Tribune*, June 19, 1876.

Just before the opening of the convention the Cincinnati *Enquirer* observed that Hancock's banner was "rapidly moving to the front." But from the first ballot he fell far behind Samuel J. Tilden, and the choice fell upon that adroit politician, labeled "reformer," who had destroyed the Tweed Ring. General Palmer was a prominent candidate for second place, but again a civilian, Thomas A. Hendricks, won. This ticket rendered it doubly certain that war issues would be prominent in the campaign. "Tilden and Hendricks have bad war records—they can't be elected," wrote one Republican to another; "Hancock was the only possible man. . . ." The convention's platform offered no more to veterans than had that of the Republicans. Soldiers and their widows and orphans, it briefly stated, had a "just claim upon the care, protection, and gratitude of their fellow citizens." [9]

Republicans had already set machinery in motion to organize veterans; in February the soldiers' national committee met to appoint leaders for state organizations and to formulate campaign plans. General Garfield headed this committee, L. Edwin Dudley was secretary, and Colonel Drake De Kay was recording secretary. The council provided bylaws for newly organized clubs, but it recommended no particular form of organization. It merely requested the co-operation of societies that desired "the success of the Republican party." Believing Indiana the most doubtful state, the committee decided to hold its national veterans' mass meeting there instead of in Pennsylvania. The general veterans' committee, headed by General Burnside, met under instructions from this executive group at Cincinnati simultaneously with the regular Republican convention. Because Burnside was ill, General John A. Dix handled the issuing of resolutions urging former soldiers to attend the proposed mass gathering.[10]

[9] Cincinnati *Enquirer*, June 24, 29, 1876; Alexander, *Political History of New York*, III, 327; Evan Jones to Fairchild, July 26, 1876, Fairchild MSS.; Eckenrode, *Hayes*, 137.

[10] Frye to Keyes, January 17, 1876, Keyes MSS.; circular announcement of organization, Veterans' National Committee, 1876, Garfield MSS.; Dudley to Garfield, February 23, 1876; *ibid.;* circular letter, Veterans' National Committee (signed by Dudley) to Garfield, March 25, 1876, *ibid.;* circular letter, Garfield and Dudley to Noyes, March 25, 1876, *ibid.;* Dudley to Garfield, March 25, 1876, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, April 10, 1876, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, April 28, (telegram), 1876, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, June 28, 1876, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, May 19, 1876, *ibid.;* Dix to Keyes, September 4, 1876, Keyes MSS.; Garfield to Hon. George W. Steele, May 30,

While Republican politicians energetically waved the bloody shirt and shouted about Democratic injustice to southern Negroes, veterans' organizers begged soldiers to support the party that had vanquished treason. A few leaders advised against making the campaign clubs open adjuncts of the party and objected especially to the obviously partisan tone of the Indianapolis convention invitation: "It was never intended nor desired at any of our former assemblies at Pittsburgh or Philadelphia that this association would be partisan in character. . . . We feel that we are shorn of our strength by this circular. . . . If then we would expect to succeed with them as a Mass, make their assemblies National untrammeled by party bias, and let the 'Old Story' and the sentiment of the hour keep them 'well up into line,' and true and steadfast to the 'colors.' " But most of the organizers realized that no one was fooled by the professed nonpartisanship of their previous conventions; they were quite willing to leave the subtler techniques to the Grand Army. The call for the Indianapolis gathering proclaimed: "It is the old fight again; the same party and the same men are arrayed against you. . . . the Democratic party . . . has presented two candidates who had little sympathy for you or your cause." [11]

Dudley obtained leave from the Post Office Department, and under his expert guidance the organization of local clubs progressed rapidly. New York's chairman urged that "Boys in Blue companies be formed in every town and county, and one or more regiments in each congressional district." Committees ensured colorful processions by furnishing red, white, and blue oilcloth caps and capes at a dollar per outfit. Dudley proudly wrote, "Companies of 'Boys in Blue' are forming all over the country and the work 'goes bravely on'. . . ." By early September New York City boasted 55 companies, Buffalo was parading 2,500

1876, Garfield Letter Books; Chicago *Tribune*, June 15, 1876; circular letter, John A. Dix "to the Soldiers and Sailors Who Served in the Union Army and Navy during the Late War," July 17, 1876, with covering letter, De Kay to Butler, July 17, 1876, Butler MSS.

[11] Oliver M. Wilson, G. F. McGinnis, and Sam Gilvray to Garfield, March 30, 1876, Garfield MSS.; circular, Dix "to the Soldiers and Sailors Who Served in the Union Army and Navy during the Late War," July 17, 1876, Butler MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, July 20, 1876.

recruits, San Francisco reported 1,000 members, and Indiana expected 75,000 to be enrolled before convention time. Encouraging reports came even from Alabama, West Virginia, and North Carolina, while the Maryland leader reported greater enthusiasm for the clubs than in any previous campaigns. The Chicago *Tribune* predicted that the Boys in Blue would "exert as powerful an influence upon the pending campaign as did the Wide-Awakes in the Lincoln campaigns." [12]

Candidates put the clubs to good use. A Butler henchman counseled the general to arrange a "demonstration of 'Boys in Blue' at Lowell and make it hot, hot, hot . . . and let the people see how you are supported by your comrades of the war." At Chicago the Boys, fully uniformed and equipped, serenaded their hero, Logan.[13]

Despite its prominence the organization encountered the usual financial difficulties. This time Chairman Zachariah Chandler of the regular committee seemed reluctant to grant any funds at all. He distrusted Dudley, who was an excellent organizer but a poor financial manager. The veterans' leaders made fervent appeals, but only after Dudley suddenly left for parts unknown did one of the regular committee's members grant five thousand dollars to the veterans' council.[14]

Once more the soldiers' organizers concentrated their efforts upon the mass convention; Dudley had firmly believed that only the "boys" could save Indiana for the Republicans. One worker urged that the gathering be made spectacular because the party "must carry Indiana. . . . I desire to see that the colored troops, especially, shall all be there—if a few thousands of them should

[12] Circular, John C. Robinson, New York Boys in Blue, "to the Soldiers and Sailors of this State," August 1, 1876, Butler MSS.; circular, Robinson and De Kay to "Comrade," September 9, 1876, *ibid.;* Indianapolis *Journal,* August 22, 1876; New York *Tribune,* August 15, September 12, 16, 26, 1876; Chicago *Tribune,* August 9, 14, 1876; Dudley to Garfield, August 3, 1876, Garfield MSS.

[13] James A. Hall to Butler, September 15, 1876, Butler MSS.; Burnham Wardell to *id.,* October 12, 1876, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune,* August 18, 1876.

[14] Dudley to Garfield, July 24, 1876, Garfield MSS.; *id.* to *id.,* August 20, 1876, *ibid.;* William S. Dodge to Chandler, August 21, 1876, W. E. Chandler MSS.; *id.* to *id.,* August 26, 1876, *ibid.;* Zachariah Chandler to R. B. Hayes, September 12, 1876, Zachariah Chandler MSS.; De Kay to Garfield, September 2, 1876, Garfield MSS.; Postmaster General J. W. Tyner to *id.,* October 24, 1876, *ibid.*

come, from the south and remain to vote,—it will do no harm." [15]

By September 20 the stage was set. The Republican press had exhorted the Indianapolis populace to extend generous hospitality to its honored guests; local committees had canvassed the city for provisions and equipment. Indiana veterans had been instructed to bring "a torch, 2 blankets and a tin cup, or canteen" apiece. Citizens contributed over 400,000 sandwiches and lent their saddle horses. Wholesale grocers donated 3,350 pounds of coffee, to be steamed in barrels at the Blind Asylum Wash House. When the warriors arrived, they found the city "blossoming with bunting and ablaze with enthusiasm," and three camps waiting to house them.[16]

For two days, while brass bands and drum corps "made the air quiver with martial music," the veterans paraded, sang, and cheered the invectives which their leaders hurled against the South. All the speeches had but one object: the revival of war hatreds. Oliver P. Morton declared, "To forgive the South is one thing, to give them control of the government is another thing." Colonel Robert J. Ingersoll waved the bloody shirt vigorously. Only when southerners proved that they were finished with treason and murder, shouted Logan, would the boys "shake hands across the bloody chasm." A letter from Hayes expressed confidence that the heroes would never imperil the war's results by neglect at the ballot box. Veterans accepted these sentiments with enthusiasm. The New York *Tribune* commented, "The political generals who skillfully worked upon their memories and patriotic impulses were right in supposing that to the loyal volunteers there is still no public question so thoroughly alive and important as the one of giving or refusing to the South a controlling power in national affairs." [17]

The Republican press smugly predicted that the convention would have an enormous effect on the election. Democratic papers were equally positive; the Indianapolis *Daily Sentinel* charged

[15] Dudley to Garfield, July 24, 1876, Garfield MSS.; L. S. Hart to *id.*, July 13, 1876, *ibid.*

[16] Indianapolis *Journal*, September 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 1876; Ben Spooner and Oliver M. Wilson, "Circular No. 10," *ibid.*, September 8, 1876.

[17] Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, III, 361; New York *Tribune*, September 21, 1876; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 21, 1876; Chicago *Tribune*, September 20, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal*, September 21, 22, 1876.

that thousands of colored voters had been imported "for election purposes." [18]

Ohio's delegation was so impressed with the gathering's political potentialities that it immediately issued a call for a meeting at Cleveland. A state affair, it was planned on a smaller scale. Despite a drizzling rain, the organizers managed to stage a parade of more than three thousand marchers. During the remainder of the campaign Republicans arranged similar local gatherings.[19]

Whenever possible, Republicans used veterans' social reunions to whip up enthusiasm for their candidates. One former soldier, inviting General Butler to a gathering in Delaware, confided, "We want to do something to . . . show the Rebels in Massachusetts as well as in Del. our confidence and esteem for you." The Society of the Army of the Tennessee chose General Logan as orator for its annual meeting. The society's president, General William T. Sherman, denied any attempt to connect politics with the proceedings, but went on to tell the meeting that should any people raise their hands against the Union, he and the Army of the Tennessee would quickly avenge the affront. The audience, accepting this comment as a reference to the question of dispatching troops to South Carolina, responded with applause that could not be silenced for minutes. The Chicago *Tribune* headed its account of the incident with the caption, "General Sherman's Views on the Suggestion of Southern Lawlessness." The speaker at an Ohio regimental reunion dwelt lingeringly on the mutual experiences and pleasant memories of army life and then gently inquired, "But gentlemen. . . . Are the results of the war rendered permanent and secure to all ages? I hope that you will not think that I am entering the field of political discussion . . . when I express the opinion that the fond hope which we all cherished at the close of the war . . . has proved but a mere delusion. Let me express the hope that with . . . thorough comprehension of the interests at stake . . . you may march bravely to the polls . . . and cast your votes for . . . Rutherford B. Hayes." This delicate

[18] Indianapolis *Journal*, September 22, 1876; New York *Tribune*, September 21, 22, 1876; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 22, 1876.

[19] Chicago *Tribune*, September 28, October 4, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal*, August 29, 1876; De Kay to Butler, October 7, 1876, Butler MSS.; *id.* to Garfield, October 7, 10, 1876, Garfield MSS.

approach, characteristic of reunion addresses, was in direct contrast to the fiery speeches of Boys in Blue gatherings. One society, proscribing even the gentlest of suggestions, remained resolutely aloof from the campaign: the Grand Army of the Republic.[20]

All the carefully manufactured veterans' enthusiasm gave point and color to the theme of the Republican campaign—that Tilden's election would place the Confederacy in the saddle. Surrounded by uniformed veterans on horseback in a pageant revival of the Civil War, Logan, Tuttle, Hurlbut, and other soldier-candidates exhorted their listeners to prevent the Rebel hordes from destroying the nation. General Benjamin Harrison, emerging reluctantly from private life to the turmoil of politics, revealed immediately that in the art of stirring half-forgotten passions he was not to be surpassed by his more experienced colleagues. He proclaimed, "I am willing to take as our ensign the tattered, worn-out old gray shirt, worn by some gallant Union hero, stained with his blood as he gave up his life for his country. . . . When they purge their party of a leprosy of secession . . . we will bury the 'bloody shirt' in the grave with the honored corpse who wore it, and not before." These words of Indiana's gubernatorial candidate received wide publicity; through the remainder of the campaign the Indianapolis *Journal* featured them at the head of its editorial section.[21]

Press propaganda, following the same pattern, was designed to appeal particularly to veterans. Republican papers emphasized Hayes's military career, characterizing him as a gallant soldier, a model officer, and the idol of his soldiers. His refusal to desert them for a congressional candidacy received due attention. Principal emphasis, however, was upon Democrats as opponents of the war and upon Tilden as a "Rebel" sympathizer. The Democratic record of hostility to army suffrage was dusted off and presented to public view.[22]

[20] L. G. Kilgore to Butler, August 9, 1876, Butler MSS.; Dalzell to *id.*, May 16, 1876, *ibid.*; Madison *Soldiers' Record*, May, 1876; Chicago *Tribune*, October 20, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal*, September 5, October 17, 1876; circular invitation, signed by K. L. Davis and others, September 21, 1876, Garfield MSS.; *Proceedings Pennsylvania G.A.R.*, 1876, circular, J. W. Latta, August 16, 1876, p. 17.

[21] Chicago *Tribune*, February 18, July 26, August 14, September 19, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal*, August 25, 1876; congratulatory letters in Harrison MSS., December, 1875–September, 1876.

[22] Chicago *Tribune*, June 24, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal*, August 18, 1876.

The possibilities that Tilden's career afforded in a bloody-shirt campaign brought joy to the hearts of Republican journalists. They asserted that he never made a Union speech, sent a volunteer to the army, or subscribed a dollar to the war's prosecution. Since he had attended the Democratic convention of 1864 as a Tammany delegate, they insisted that he share responsibility for the platform's "traitorous peace resolutions." Proofs of his disloyalty in the "dark days of the Rebellion" continued to accumulate daily, the Chicago *Tribune* remarked happily under the heading "Something for Soldiers to Read." Certainly the charges of treason increased steadily to the close of the campaign. These were capped with the assertions that the South was supporting Tilden and Hendricks "upon the very issues for which the soldiers fought" and that Democratic success would mean federal assumption of the Confederate debt. And apparently the reiterated argument that a Democratic victory would nullify the war's results was highly successful. In mid-September Hayes wrote that it was "rapidly becoming the one topic of the press and of speakers. It *does* tell." A "vast majority" in Ohio, he informed Carl Schurz, had concluded that "a Democratic victory will bring the Rebellion to power." [23]

In September Republican papers came forth with a "striking illustration of Tilden's warm affection for the soldiers," a letter with which Logan created considerable excitement at the Indianapolis soldiers' convention. The author, a one-legged veteran who had won an internal-revenue clerkship from the Radicals, had been replaced by a Democrat when, in 1867, Johnson turned the New York patronage over to Tilden. Interviewing Tilden in an effort to win a new appointment, the soldier insisted that his sacrifices entitled him to a civil-service position. He would not, he admitted, be willing to work for a Democratic victory. "Tilden flew into a violent passion and with the most terrible profanity cursed me for having gone to the war; said it served me right, and it was a pity I hadn't lost both legs! He insulted the memory of the heroic dead . . . he cursed the living witnesses and actors in that terrible struggle." Democrats did their best to discredit this

[23] Chicago *Tribune,* August 18, 19, 23, 25, September 22, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal,* September 29, 1876; R. B. Hayes to Edwards Pierrepont, September 16, 1876, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes,* III, 359, 360; Hayes to Schurz, August 9, 1876, *ibid.*

letter, but the fact that the author of it was a minister gave verisimilitude to his charges. Moreover, he had been present at Indianapolis to verify them. The best that Democrats could do was to produce the statement of another minister that when discussing his removal in 1874 the veteran had made no mention of Tilden.[24]

Democrats were highly confident of the potentialities in the administration scandals. Emphasizing their own candidate's record, they concentrated their attack on the reform issue and at first gave no attention whatever to the veterans. But the energy and success with which Republicans were organizing former soldiers finally drove Democrats to abandon their "soldier is a citizen" position of the previous campaign. Preparing for defensive action, a group of Democratic veterans met in August to organize the Union Soldiers' and Sailors' Reform Association and to name General Joseph Hooker as president. This society's executive committee issued a circular denouncing Republican use of "military *politico* associations" like the G.A.R. in order to create the impression that "Republicans alone fought the battles of the Union cause." Republicans claimed to be the soldiers' friend; yet a Democratic House passed a bounty-equalization bill which the Republican Senate ignored. The same Democratic House, unfairly dubbed "Confederate House," had given 43 out of 189 jobs to Union soldiers, while the previous body, under Republican domination, had given only 23 out of 219. The committee proudly pointed to "a difference of 90 per cent in favor of the friendship of the Democratic party for the soldier." The party, in fact, had been "just, even generous," while Republicans had been "profuse in promises and pretences." The broadside begged veterans to form Tilden clubs.[25]

While these clubs were developing on the pattern of the Boys in Blue, the organizers planned a mass convention at Indianapolis as a counterbalance to the Republican demonstration. With booming of cannon, martial music, and enthusiastic addresses, leaders—among them the once-Radical John M. Palmer, the G.A.R.'s first

[24] Chicago *Tribune*, September 22, October 11, 1876.

[25] W. W. Hanna to Henry Watterson, July 7, 1876, Henry Watterson MSS. (1863–1920), Library of Congress; Joseph Hooker, "to the Patriotic Soldiers and Sailors of America," circular, included with letter, John M. Butler to Grover Cleveland, May 4, 1885, Grover Cleveland MSS. (1859–1907), Library of Congress.

elected commander in Illinois—denied Republican claims to a monopoly on veterans' enthusiasm. The resolutions denounced Republicans for rekindling war animosities, thanked the Democratic House for trying to equalize bounties, and challenged the assumption that "the Union was saved by a party and not by a whole people." The Indianapolis *Journal* pronounced the torchlight procession, only seven or eight blocks long, a "dismal failure," but admitted that Democrats had staged a "reasonably big rally." "But what does it all go for? Does it prove that the Democratic party was loyal during the war? . . . Certainly not." The Chicago *Tribune* attributed the size of the crowd to the "absence of expense for travel and food," a factor which it failed to consider in discussing the success of the Republican convention. The press, as well as the Republican state committee, charged that the rally was a mere pretext to bring ballot-box stuffers into the state.[26]

The Indianapolis gathering apparently exhausted the energies of the Democratic organizers; the second convention, planned for Albany, New York, failed to materialize. During the last month of the campaign, however, General McClellan assumed the task of rallying veterans to Tilden's standard. His friendship for the candidate prompted his consent to take the stump, and Democrats hoped he might "offset the attempt to revive . . . the passions of the war." Not the least part of his campaign work was a series of addresses to veterans' gatherings in various cities. On these occasions he resolutely met Republicans on their own ground. "Comrades, fellow soldiers!" he cried to a Boston audience. "You know full well that it was only to preserve the Union, not to oppress the conquered south, not to return the whites to that condition of slavery from which we liberated the blacks, that we so often met the foe." At the campaign's close McClellan's name headed a list of veterans' signatures to an appeal that Pennsylvania "stand by us now in our efforts to purify and reform the Government we preserved. . . . The war is over, and we *must* and *shall* have peace." [27]

[26] John Love to McClellan, September 25, 1876, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCV; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, October 4, 6, 1876; Chicago *Tribune*, October 4, 5, 6, 1876; Indianapolis *Journal*, September 26, 30, October 5, 6, 1876; New York *Tribune*, October 4, 5, 1876.

[27] New York *Tribune*, August 28, October 19, 1876; Myers, *McClellan*, 491; D. C. Robinson to McClellan, October 14, 1876, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCV;

Democrats vigorously denied the charges that their candidate had been disloyal during the war. In the House, Abram Hewitt vindicated Tilden's position, and the nominee himself issued a statement. Leaders believed that the scathing attack of General Dix, acting head of the Republican veterans' committee, warranted a definite reply. At Tilden's request John Bigelow set forth a long record of the candidate's war activities in answer "not only to the insinuation of General Dix, but to any and every other charge" of disloyalty. Bigelow denounced as "utterly wanton and shameless" the attempt to associate Tilden's name with the Confederates. These efforts at vindication had not the slightest effect on Republican writers, who ignored them. Near the close of the campaign the Chicago *Tribune* directed to veterans an editorial proclaiming that Tilden's nomination "was an insult to the memory of every soldier who died in the South, as it is an insult to the patriotism and courage of every Northern soldier who has survived the war." [28]

If the struggle of Republican versus Democratic organizers and newspapers had been the only factor in the result, certainly the veterans would have gone en masse to the polls and voted for Hayes. With the prominence accorded Civil War issues, perhaps most of them did. It has been suggested, indeed, that had it not been for the votes of the former soldiers and their dependents, Tilden's majority would have been overwhelming and no election dispute could have arisen.[29] This may well have been the case; but it is, of course, impossible to determine to what extent the veterans influenced the outcome.

When it became clear on election night that the Democrats had won New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Indiana, Republican papers and party headquarters conceded victory to Tilden. These successes, added to the support of a solidly Democratic South, would make him President. Only the New York

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MS., McClellan's speech to veterans at Faneuil Hall, Boston, October 30, 1876, *ibid.;* MSS., McClellan's speeches to soldiers at Indianapolis and Dayton, October, 1876, *ibid.;* circular, Philadelphia, October 28, 1876, *ibid.*

[28] Flick, *Samuel Jones Tilden,* 310; John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life* (New York, 1909–13), 5 vols., V, 275; Bigelow to an inquirer, September, 1876, in *id.* (ed.), *Letters of Samuel Jones Tilden,* II, 453; Chicago *Tribune,* October 9, 1876.

[29] Eckenrode, *Hayes,* 146.

Times editorial group obstinately refused to accept defeat. When these men received the fateful telegram from the Democratic National Committee's financial head requesting latest reports from three states, they conceived a bold plan. If Democrats had to ask the *Times* for election news from South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida, they could not be sure of victory there. With the electoral votes of those states and a disputed one from Oregon, Hayes had a bare majority. "Zach" Chandler, dragged from bed, approved a scheme to save the election for the Republicans; and telegrams sped to leaders in the three states, announcing that if they could report Republican majorities, Hayes would be the next President.[30]

While party leaders hastened southward with assurances of troops and money, closely followed by Democratic "watchers," the country entered a period of uncertainty and excitement. "By reckless characters," wrote Carl Schurz, "the ear of the people is familiarized with the cry of forcible resistance and civil war. The alarm of capital and the stagnation of business are growing more distressing every day." The situation was explosive; neither party displayed any disposition to yield. Democrats, seeing victory snatched from them by fraudulent means, were particularly bitter. Newspapers cried that the army might be used to intimidate the House and inaugurate Hayes and charged that the administration planned to replace Hancock with Sheridan in command of the Department of the East. Sheridan would then place New York City under military control. Democratic resentment mounted when Republicans claimed that it was the vice-president's duty to count the votes and decide the outcome.[31]

And once more in a time of crisis the organized veterans were used to buttress a party's position, and the country faced the danger that irresponsible leaders might lead their soldier-followers

[30] Watterson, "*Marse Henry*," *An Autobiography*, I, 294–95; John Bigelow, *The Life of Samuel J. Tilden* (New York, 1895), 2 vols., II, 8–12; Paul Leland Haworth, *The Hayes-Tilden Disputed Presidential Election of 1876* (Cleveland, 1906).

[31] Manton Marble, *A Secret Chapter of Political History. The Electoral Commission* (New York, 1878), pages unnumbered; Schurz to T. W. Ferry, December 3, 1876, in Bancroft (ed.), *Speeches, Correspondence and Political Papers of Schurz*, III, 339; Chicago *Tribune*, January 3, 1877; Haworth, *Disputed Election*, 187; Hancock, *Reminiscences of Hancock*, 160; Hancock to W. T. Sherman, December 28, 1876, *ibid.*, 152.

over the brink of angry threats into violence. In 1866 and again in 1868 the Republicans had used the G.A.R. in a perilous game of bluff; this time it was the Democrats who gathered together a horde of veterans in preparation for a bloody settlement. Genuinely alarmed about Republican intentions and cognizant that control of the army gave their opponents the best cards, several Democrats began surreptitiously to strengthen and expand their veterans' campaign organizations.

First in the field was a group that had not been prominent during the campaign; its title, indeed, indicates that it was formed after election day. This was the "Constitutional Democratic Veteran Legion," which sent out circulars asking each recipient to organize all former soldiers of his locality in preparation for a "resort to force" should Grant and the southern returning boards seek to inaugurate Hayes. A second circular to a leading adherent in each state was confidential; it requested information regarding the state's arsenals and federal buildings, as well as the number and efficiency of its military organizations. The third, dated November 16, gave the "obligation" oath. Each member had to swear that whereas the Democratic ticket had received a majority vote, he would bear "true faith" to the "Constitutionally-expressed will of the people" and to the objects of the Legion. Further, he would obey the commands of his superior officers.

On November 25 still another circular, enclosing blank commissions, urged the necessity for "utmost vigilance" in selecting members, who should conform in all respects to federal army requirements. Officers must send daily reports of progress.[32] Republican papers, investigating rumors of these activities, learned that Democrats regarded the organization as a legitimate effort to prepare for the possibility of armed action.

Leaders of the veterans' campaign organization were also preparing for action. General John M. Corse had replaced Hooker as president, and the Illinois general took his duties seriously. It was reported that under his vigorous leadership some of the party's "best men" in Illinois had enrolled. Corse was no less eager to expand the society on a national scale. On November 15 he wired General Palmer, a member of the society's national committee

[32] New York *Times,* December 18, 1876.

as well as a "visiting statesman" in Louisiana, that "two hundred thousand ex Union soldiers, embracing thousands who voted for Hayes, sustain you. If Tilden is fraudulently counted out in Louisiana, the end is not yet. You have Illinois behind you. Corse-Cameron." On the same day he wired a member of Trumbull's committee at New Orleans, "If Louisiana electoral vote is stolen from us, we will get California and Oregon. We have one hundred and sixty thousand ex-soldiers now enrolled. Vast number of Republicans with us. Stand firm. Corse." Three weeks later the general was still determined, although less optimistic about the number of veterans who would go to arms for Tilden. He wired the acting secretary of the national Democratic committee, "Glory to God. Hold on to the one vote in Oregon. I have one hundred thousand men to back it up." [33]

General Corse's indefatigable activities, indeed, were bringing him a degree of prominence. When the Republican press next turned the spotlight of publicity upon the organized Democratic veterans, they directed its beam to Chicago. On December 1, Corse and Daniel Cameron issued a circular requesting prominent veterans throughout the country to send addresses of former soldiers who supported Tilden's principles. The association wished "the co-operation of every man who ever carried a musket." A week later an open letter appeared over the same signatures, addressed to General W. T. Sherman as commander of the army and to "former officers and comrades in the service." Corse informed the army that in the presence of "a dark and dangerous conspiracy . . . to hold . . . the government by military force" it was "your duty to give effect" to "the will of the people clearly and constitutionally expressed. . . . To pursue any other course than that of strict non-interference in party differences" would end the army's existence as an "American institution."

When rumors about this circular leaked out, Corse released it to the press, and he and Cameron were immediately besieged with questions. Cameron admitted that the society's 100,000 members

[33] St. Clair A. Mulholland to McClellan, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXIX; Corse to Palmer, November 15, 1877, in *Senate Misc. Doc. 44, Electoral Vote of Certain States; Testimony Taken Before the Sub-Committee of the Committee on Privileges and Elections*, 44 Cong., 2 Sess. (1877), 411–12; *id.* to Perry H. Smith, *ibid.*, 412; *Senate Reports*, I, 44 Cong., 2 Sess., 31, 32.

were ready to march on Washington or New York at a moment's notice. Whether or not Tilden was declared elected, they would insist that he be inaugurated; if this was not possible in Washington, they would see that he took the oath in New York. Corse confided to a reporter: "Why, we don't want to make war, but there will be fighting sure. It will have to come to it, and you will find that the army will lay down its arms. They don't want to fight the American people." Asked if he anticipated a revolution, the general replied: ". . . these men are thoroughly in earnest, and they will fight if Tilden is not declared President." The Chicago *Tribune* added to its account of this interview the report that members were drilling and that some of them had received breechloaders.[34]

Rumors were current that Generals Franklin and McClellan were playing important roles in the work of organization, although none of the stories was clear about their precise position in the association. Material in the McClellan papers establishes the fact that a few months later both were on the national executive committee, Franklin as leader for Connecticut and McClellan as commander for New Jersey. Probably their positions were the same at this time. Henry Watterson may have been thinking of them when he later remarked that "two of the most famous and popular heroes among the general officers of the Union army . . . were pressing armed organization upon the Democrats." According to Abram Hewitt, the commander in chief had been selected, but he declined to "use names." He later told a writer for *McClure's*, however, that the choice was "a man of national reputation."

Certainly, General Corse, as president, was directing organization and training from Chicago; but it is possible that another, better-known leader was working in the background, ready to come forward only when the society was ready for action. Possibly McClellan was the one agreed upon; in any case his correspondence indicates clearly that he was working diligently to build up the organization and that the field of his efforts was by no means confined to New Jersey. Not all the replies to his inquiries were encouraging. From Pennsylvania came reports that

[34] Chicago *Tribune*, December 10, 1876; New York *Times*, December 14, 1876.

except in the cities Democratic veterans had formed no separate clubs but had enrolled in the Tilden and Hendricks societies.[35]

Other replies were enthusiastic. Pittsburgh leaders had organized and equipped one thousand men during the campaign; "they are of course disbanded but could readily, if required, be reorganized. . . . The 18th regiment . . . will be in Washington the 4th of March to witness the inauguration of Tilden." From Massachusetts came information that "very influential officers in various parts of the State" were busy enrolling members and that the leaders hoped to receive "secret assistance" from the Democratic state committee. "We will continue to labor zealously . . . and can faithfully assure you that any movement to which you may lend your name, not at all to say which you would head, would be the signal for the arousing *en Masse* here all the conservative Soldiers and Sailors, to be counselled or lead [*sic*] by you." [36]

Events deepened the conviction of Democratic veterans' organizers that the situation warranted preparation for armed action. The party press pointed out that troops were slowly being transferred to Washington and that several warships had been stationed in New York Harbor. "The Administration intends to 'bulldoze' New York," warned the New York *World*. From the three disputed southern states and from Oregon came two sets of votes, immediately posing the problem of how to count them. With a Republican Senate and a Democratic House it seemed quite possible that on March 4 the country might have no President—or that it might have two. Newspapers expressed fear that the army might be used to settle the issue. When Hewitt, Tilden's campaign manager, asked the army's commander in chief what he would do if the two houses had reached no agreement by noon

[35] New York *Times*, December 18, 1876; Mulholland to McClellan, September 27, 1877, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXIX; Henry Watterson, "Colonel Watterson's Rejoinder to Ex-Senator Edmunds," in *Century Magazine*, LXXXVI (June, 1913), 286; Allan Nevins (ed.), *Selected Writings of Abram S. Hewitt* (Morningside Heights, N.Y., 1937), 177; Joseph M. Rogers, "How Hayes Became President," in *McClure's Magazine* (New York, 1893–1929), XXIII (May, 1904), 77; W. R. Hartshouse [?] to McClellan, January 11, 1877, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCVI; W. W. H. Davis to *id.*, January 11, 1877, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, January 15, 1877, *ibid.*; B. F. Meyers to Davis, January 18, 1877, *ibid.*

[36] Davis to McClellan, January 15, 1877, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCVI; John M. Tobin to *id.*, January 8, 1877, *ibid.*; D. H. Muway to *id.*, January 22, 1877, *ibid.*

of Inauguration Day, Sherman replied, "Then, if I must, I shall obey the man selected by the Senate." These developments spurred the soldiers' leaders to untiring work in strengthening their association.[37]

According to Hewitt, these officers succeeded in perfecting organization in fifteen states, and they had gained assurances from "many" governors of their "willingness to act, in case an emergency should arise" in backing Tilden's inauguration with military force. Membership expanded most rapidly in the Midwest, where feeling was particularly tense. While General Ewing, Ohio commander of the Union Veteran Reform Association, assured five thousand assembled Ohio Democrats that fraud could not be prevented by "cries of peace, submission. . . . Resistance to usurpation is obedience to law," and George Julian told an Indiana mass convention that "not in submission to flagrant acts of tyranny, but in resistance, must we expect our deliverance," the soldiers' leaders were quietly at work. In Indiana an officer of the Democratic Emmet Guards issued a call for a convention to organize state militia and "bind ourselves to obey the call of the governor to quell any disturbance." It was reported that one hundred stands of arms, billed as ready-made clothing, had arrived in Shelbyville and had been hastily stored in a business office. The quiet, somewhat furtive activities in the West were strikingly similar to the Republicans' preparation of the G.A.R. for action against Johnson in 1866.[38]

Most Republicans professed to believe that these arrangements were a gigantic bluff. The New York *Times* declared, "Some Democrats have undoubtedly endeavored quietly to extend the impression that large organizations had been formed on the supposition that it would create a panic among Republican politicians." This line was in accordance with the general Republican

[37] New York *World*, November 20, 21, December 12, 1876; Milton Harlow Northrup, "A Grave Crisis in American History; the Inner History of the Origin and Formation of the Electoral Commission of 1877," in *Century Magazine*, LXII, New Series XL (October, 1901), 923; Chicago *Tribune*, January 3, 1877; Willis Fletcher Johnson, *Life of William Tecumseh Sherman, U.S.A., A Graphic History of His Career in War and Peace* (n.p., 1891), 548.

[38] Nevins (ed.), *Selected Writings of Hewitt*, 178; Flick, *Samuel Jones Tilden*, 399; New York *World*, December 21, 1876, January 1, 8, 9, 1877; New York *Times*, December 14, 18, 19, 1876, January 7, 1877.

technique of scouting the possibility of an actual physical clash. The party press constantly denied any thought of using force to inaugurate Hayes or any plan of massing forces at Washington or New York. It publicized Democratic threats as evidence of the party's irresponsible response to a difficult situation, and it handled reports of the widespread veterans' organization in the same manner. Apparently Republicans hoped that by maintaining an unruffled calm the crisis could be kept from boiling over and that on March 4 they might quietly walk off with the prize.

Certainly they were consistent in underplaying the possibilities of violence. When, one evening while the Hayes family sat at supper, a bullet pierced the parlor window and sped through two rooms to bury itself in the library wall, a strict injunction of secrecy was laid on the entire household. No intimation of the incident crept into the press. During the House debate on the compromise commission, Democrats indicated that the country was on the brink of violence; General Garfield, scoffing at their fears, confidently proclaimed that the American people would not fight over the issue.[39]

The quiet work of Republican veteran organizers followed the same policy. The campaign clubs had been in excellent working order at the close of the campaign, and Drake De Kay kept them so, although no publicity attended their activities. His principal concern was to shower members with propaganda. After distributing twenty thousand copies of a letter from General Dix, he informed Garfield that it was highly desirable to send out the general's electoral-bill speech: "To send one copy to each county commander I need 1500 copies—to supply the town organizers I need about 5000 copies." [40]

The Grand Army carefully remained silent. The Democratic press charged that the society was "secretly organizing with a view of acting unlawfully and by force of arms to further partisan ends." Little preparation would be needed, to be sure; the Grand Army had made a practice of gathering up obsolete muskets from the government. But if G.A.R. leaders formulated plans for armed

[39] Charles Richard Williams, *Life of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States* (Boston and New York, 1914), 2 vols., II, 2; Northrup, "Grave Crisis," *loc. cit.*, 933.

[40] Drake De Kay to Garfield, February 6, 1877, Garfield MSS.

action, they concealed them well. Even Logan was quiet—perhaps because he was so busy trying to win re-election as senator. In any case, he had abandoned the society as too weak to aid his career. Since 1872 he had not bothered to attend an encampment and had even allowed his membership to lapse. The organization was in the hands of those who were determined to live down the society's partisan reputation. Officially it could not have been more circumspect. At the New York encampment in January, Commander James Tanner condemned as "utterly false" the charges that the G.A.R. would be used to ensure Hayes's inauguration. The California commander went so far as to censure a Sacramento post severely for planning an inaugural ball, "thereby laying itself open to the charge of . . . party bias." [41]

Beneath their confident attitude, many Republicans were anxious. Morton, leaving Indianapolis for Washington, announced for publication that he anticipated no trouble "beyond bluster and blow for the purpose of intimidating Republicans." But to his associates he had expressed himself quite differently. The attorney general, writing to Hayes about the disturbing letters which Grant was receiving, remarked, "There is a great deal said of extensive preparations to seat Tilden by force. Several men have called on me to assure me that there is danger." A confidant of the Wisconsin governor wrote, "Are the Democrats really going to get up a fight . . . ? I think they will, providing they can see their way through. . . . All depends on Tilden. . . . The Governor wants to be ready. . . . He must find out about the standing of every company bearing arms, and put them into loyal hands. . . . For we must be ready." [42]

With the adoption of the electoral-commission bill, it appeared evident that Democratic leaders would accept a compromise; yet they consented only in the belief that the commission's one independent member would be Justice David Davis, who might swing to their side the decision of the otherwise evenly matched board.

[41] *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1877, p. 84; E. Rice to Butler, October 13, 1876, Butler MSS.; *Proceedings First to Fourteenth Meetings*, 205, 252, 266, 315, 376, 436; New York *Times*, January 25, 1877; *California G.A.R. Proceedings, 1867–1882*, 162.

[42] New York *Times*, December 19, 1876; Taft to Hayes, December 6, 1876, quoted in Williams, *Life of Hayes*, II, 1 n.; G. Allen to Keyes, December 12, 1876, Keyes MSS.; Seymour to *id.*, November 8, 1876, *ibid.*

They were stunned, therefore, when the Illinois legislature, deadlocked in a senatorial struggle between Logan and John M. Palmer, chose Davis. His position on the commission was taken by a Republican.[43]

If Democratic leaders were disposed to give continued support to the compromise, this was not the case with the disgruntled veterans' officers. The Union Veteran Reform Association proceeded with its preparations even though its indefatigable leader, Corse, was busy in Washington trying to explain—or rather, not to explain—his telegrams before a senatorial subcommittee headed by Morton and Logan. McClellan was reported to have suggested that a little fighting to inaugurate Tilden would do no harm; and one of the general's admirers assured him that thousands would join in such an enterprise if assured of his leadership: "But speak the word, and you will have a hundred thousand 'boys in blue' . . . armed, at Washington, by Sunday. Then you can surround the White House and the Capitol, and have Governor Tilden sworn in." The writer urged the general to issue a stirring address to former soldiers, as did also one of the state commanders. But McClellan was not disposed to emerge from the background.[44]

When Democratic leaders acquiesced in the commission's consistently partisan decisions, the veterans' officers were among those who complained that a firmer stand might have led to a different result. McClellan expressed his "intense disappointment" to Tilden, while McClernand disagreed with Hewitt's belief that the Republicans would have fought to sustain Hayes. Had the national committee chairman not "wavered at a decisive moment," the party's "bold front" would have "precluded the possibility of the electoral commission . . . and have settled everything satisfactorily without a blow." [45]

Views of prominent participants in the crisis differed as to whether the country was actually close to bloodshed. Hewitt said

[43] Haworth, *Disputed Election*, 190 ff., 218; Chicago *Tribune*, January 24, 1877; New York *Tribune*, February 16, 1877.

[44] Haworth, *Disputed Election*, 219; *Senate Misc. Doc. 44*, 388, 411, 412; *Senate Reports*, I, 31; Hoar, *Autobiography*, I, 416; "E Pluribus Unum" to McClellan, February 27, 1877, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCVI; John M. Tobin to *id.*, January 8, 1877, *ibid.*

[45] McClellan to Tilden, March 5, 1877, in Bigelow (ed.), *Letters of Samuel Jones Tilden*, II, 547; John A. McClernand to *id.*, March 2, 1877, *ibid.*, 545.

that civil war was "much nearer than was even at that time supposed." On November 22 Bigelow confided disconsolately to his diary his fear that "bloody strife" was imminent, while George F. Hoar wrote that "there would have been a resort to arms" had it not been "for the bitter experience of a few years before." On the other hand Henry Watterson stated, "At no time did I apprehend any physical collision. . . . Truth to say, both sides were playing something of a 'bluff.' Neither was ready or anxious for a fight, and, in extremis, whichever won, the other was bound to submit. My sole thought was publicity, agitation; this I urged from the outset and continued to urge to the end." [46]

Thoughtful Democrats could readily see that they had little chance for success if they resorted to force. Their southern associates, unwilling to carry the issue so far, promised no support, while their opponents controlled the army and navy and the Treasury. Perhaps even the veterans' organizers were hoping, like Watterson, to carry the day by bluster without actually calling their members to action. If so, they were nonetheless thwarted at being forced to accept defeat with no opportunity to test their bluff. The bargain by which the leaders gave up the presidency for the cessation of southern Reconstruction could hold little satisfaction for them, even if they were aware of the terms.[47]

It is possible that any chance of frightening Republicans into submission with the threat of an armed veterans' organization was defeated at the outset by Tilden's firm refusal to sanction a policy that might lead to conflict. An editor quoted his remark in the New York *Sun* office, "I will never be a party to any course which will array my countrymen in civil war. . . ." This was Tilden's position in conferences with his advisers. There were those, of course, who suggested that this statesmanlike attitude did not necessitate complete withdrawal from active leadership into scholarly preparation of precedents buttressing his position.

[46] Nevins (ed.), *Selected Writings of Hewitt*, 178; Bigelow, *Retrospections*, V, 286; Hoar, *Autobiography*, I, 369; Hugh McCulloch, *Men and Measures of Half a Century, Sketches and Comments* (New York, 1888), 416; J. K. Proudfit to Keyes, April 9, 1877, Keyes MSS.; Watterson, "Colonel Watterson's Rejoinder to Ex-Senator Edmunds," *loc. cit.*, 286; Alexander, *Political History of New York*, III, 352; Barry, *Forty Years in Washington*, 13.

[47] New York *Times*, December 18, 1876; John Goode, *Recollections of a Lifetime by John Goode of Virginia* (New York, 1906), 156.

Henry Watterson commented that there are two ways of ensuring our rights: one, by law; the other, by force. Pointing out that the first means—through the United States Supreme Court—was practically closed to Democrats he continued: ". . . conceiving Mr. Tilden to be the rightfully chosen Chief Magistrate, I proposed to seat him in office; to provide the physical means of doing so; to take all needful risks, and to leave the result to look after itself. There are times when impudence is safety. I would have had Mr. Tilden emulate the firmness of Hampden. . . . his influence was speedily against agitation. I say it in no reproach . . . that it was impossible to proceed without Mr. Tilden at the front. It was for him to lead, the rest to follow. Thus the ground slipped away from us inch by inch." Republicans benefited from Tilden's attitude; Blaine later told Bigelow that "if the Democrats had been firm the Republicans had no alternative but to yield."

But if Tilden gave no inspired leadership, he nevertheless received hundreds of letters from former officers and volunteers, as well as from civilians, offering him armed support. His biographer has concluded from these that it would have been easy "for a militant leader to incite an outbreak." [48]

As the people thankfully returned to mundane affairs, Logan, out of a job, looked hopefully to the cabinet. The Chicago Veteran Club willingly importuned the new President to appoint him secretary of war, but the sanction of his comrades in arms proved unavailing in face of the reformers' unswerving opposition to the machine politician.[49]

During Hayes's administration, several factors combined to bring veterans into greater political prominence. After the close electoral decision, each party foresaw a bitter struggle in 1880 and turned to former soldiers for support. Republicans began to count the possible cost of their failure to enact the soldiers' demands, while Democrats seemed eager to refute charges that they were the veterans' enemy. Claim agents, who were still canvassing

[48] Edward P. Mitchell, *Memoirs of an Editor, Fifty Years of American Journalism* (New York, 1924), 300; Nevins (ed.), *Selected Writings of Hewitt,* 164; Goode, *Recollections,* 156; newspaper report of Watterson's speech at Louisville, March 22, 1877, quoted in Bigelow, *Retrospections,* V, 286, 303; *id., Life of Tilden,* II, 74; Flick, *Samuel Jones Tilden,* 361.

[49] Chicago *Tribune,* February 28, 1877; Williams, *Life of Hayes,* II, 22.

the country for pension applications, recognized the opportunity to push higher demands through Congress, thus heightening their prospects for profit. Soldiers, stimulated to a sense of their strength by the persistent courting of their favor by both parties and persuaded by claim-agent propaganda that the government owed them further concessions, again saw profit in organization. The stage was set for the entrance of the powerful veterans' legions into the political arena.

The infiltration of Democrats into the Grand Army was one indication of their heightened interest in the veterans. The policy of the society's leaders rendered this possible; they hoped that their professions of nonpartisanship might persuade the Democratic soldier to assume the ties of "Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty." Once he became a member, he might slowly be induced to fall into line with his comrades behind the Republican banner. An Indiana G.A.R. leader wrote that the nonpartisan veterans' society would win the Democratic veteran

> by bringing him into that same common fellowship that strikes down party feeling, and makes him keenly in sympathy with the old loyal sentiment once perhaps avowed by him, but which time and circumstances have chilled within him. By distinguishing the association as partisan we deny, in one sense, to those of different political sentiment, their feeling a hearty reunion, we otherwise might expect, and by which alone could we hope to claim the Veteran from his Democratic proclivities.
>
> To be sure we understand that in all such gatherings the Republican Party is indirectly benefited. This is what we want. . . . Many will step into the ranks as Soldires [*sic*], who would not march as Republicans. Then, having them again with us we must seek to hold them 'to the faith of the faithful' by quickening within them a lively sense that those who fought and saved this country by force of arms are the same men who now try to uphold it by peaceful means with the same sentiment. . . . We feel that to still hold the soldiers fast as a power in the land no party line should be drawn between them as soldiers. This will alienate them, array them in societies against each other. . . . If then we would expect to succeed with them as a Mass . . . let the

"old story" and the sentiment of the hour keep them "well up into line," and true and steadfast to the "colors." [50]

Later the same politician wrote regarding the Grand Army that "though political affinities were the chief aim, charity and fraternity were also made cardinal tenets that would hold fast many, and thus also preserve political supremacy indirectly and as an incident." [51]

G.A.R. leaders did not foresee, however, that the influx of Democrats would be so large that they could sometimes elect leaders of their own political faith. In some places, particularly in the Indiana, Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey departments, they successfully challenged Republican influence over the society. By the 1880's the New York *Tribune* could comment, "It is undeniable that a majority of the members . . . are Republicans. . . . But in some states . . . the membership is said to be about equally divided." In 1877, near the close of McClellan's gubernatorial campaign in New Jersey, the Pennsylvania Department made political capital for the general by honoring him on its "Grand Army Day." A friend remarked, "I could not help being surprised that the Grand Army of the Republic should have given you such an enthusiastic greeting—It speaks well for them as at present organized." [52]

The organization's Republican officers defied this challenge to their control and continued their efforts to keep members in line behind the party standard. During 1882, for example, the Pennsylvania Department's leaders quietly worked the society "for all it was worth." Post treasuries provided uniforms and traveling expenses for an impressive "Grand Army Day," which

[50] O. M. Wilson, G. F. McGinnis, and Sam Gilvray to Garfield, March 30, 1876, Garfield MSS.

[51] Wilson, *Grand Army of the Republic*, 206; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1873, pp. 56, 86; *Early History of Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 82, 137; *Proceedings 9th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 1875, p. 20; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 320, 366.

[52] New York *Tribune*, January 20, 1887; McMahon to McClellan, October 19, 1877, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXX; J. M. Vanderslice to *id.*, October 1, 1877, *ibid.*, XXIX; Thomas S. Ashton to *id.*, October 12, 19, and undated telegram, 1877, *ibid.*, XXX; McQuade to McClellan, June 9, 1879, *ibid.*, XXXIII; D. C. Pavey to *id.*, November 12, 1878, *ibid.;* Joseph Schnell, Jr., to *id.*, April 8, 1879, *ibid.;* John W. Woetten to *id.*, June 17, 1876, *ibid.;* J. B. Denworth to *id.*, November 15, 1877, *ibid.*

turned out to be a camouflaged rally for the Republican gubernatorial candidate. General James Beaver, one leg conspicuous by its absence, rode in the parade on a "magnificent charger" and drew the enthusiastic cheers of his comrades.[53]

Another indication of Democratic interest in the former soldier was the revived energy of party organizers. Undoubtedly these workers were inspired by McClellan's return to politics. When New Jersey Democrats nominated him for governor in 1877, his supporters relied heavily upon veterans' campaign clubs. General St. Clair Mulholland, Corse's lieutenant for the Union Veteran Reform Association in Pennsylvania, urged McClellan to make full use of the New Jersey branch: ". . . thousands of the men who fought with you and who love you will enroll themselves to swell your majority." Democrats rejoiced at the opportunity afforded by McClellan's leadership to win veterans from Republican ranks. One wrote from Camden, "The Republican soldiers here will vote for you." This confidence was well placed; veterans' ovations carried the general to the governor's chair. An associate wrote from Washington, "I hardly hoped we could win . . . but you helped us both . . . by touching the old soldier vote." [54]

After this victory some Democrats advocated McClellan as a presidential candidate and used soldiers' campaign organizations to enhance his political strength. The president of the Massachusetts association requested his services as well as those of other soldiers for a course of lectures to the clubs in that state. Profits would "further the systematic organization of all the democratic soldiers in the commonwealth" that they might be "used effectively in the campaign of 1880." The chief object, however, was to put McClellan "in training for the presidential campaign." After "this scheme" was "well started in Boston," McClellan

[53] Philadelphia *Times,* October 25, 1883, quoted in Washington *National Tribune,* November 1, 1883.

[54] St. Clair A. Mulholland to McClellan, September 27, 1877, McClellan MSS. 2d Ser., XXIX; James M. Scord to *id.*, October 11, 1877, *ibid.;* George W. Price, Jr., to *id.*, September 27, 1877, *ibid.*, XXIX, XXX; Thomas G. Bunnell to *id.*, October 2, 1877, *ibid.;* S. Kinsman to *id.*, October 8, 1877, *ibid.;* Eldridge Mix to *id.*, November 6, 1877, *ibid.;* Frederick Eberle to *id.*, October 1, 1877, *ibid.;* Edward B. Cox to *id.*, September 26, 1877, *ibid.;* M. S. Muselez to *id.*, October 25, 1877, *ibid.;* Edward D. Fox to *id.*, November 2, 1877, *ibid.;* Theodore F. Randolph to *id.*, November 8, 1877, *ibid.*, XXXI.

should lecture in western cities. General Corse would push his interests in Chicago, while other leaders of the organization would help him in St. Louis and elsewhere. McClellan decided that his "official position" precluded encouragement of this project, but invitations to veterans' gatherings continued to pour in upon him.[55]

In Congress the Democrats ceased their opposition to veterans' legislation. Rivaling Republicans as champions of the soldiers' cause, they eagerly supported the claim-agent bills. One veteran reminded his Republican congressman that "the Democrat Party says come with us and we will do for you what your own Party have failed to do." The eagerness of Democratic congressmen to support arrears-of-pension legislation indicated their changed attitude toward the nation's heroes.[56]

Republicans, too, displayed greater interest in the veterans. They supported pension bills, and those who had been soldiers attended reunions and joined the G.A.R. More than ever they regarded participation in veterans' assemblies as the most rewarding method of achieving prominence. When Harrison declined to address the Army of the Cumberland reunion, a committee member, suggesting that the general could be President in 1884, pointed out that this was a greater opportunity to win a national reputation "than years in Congress." Campaign workers did not relax after Hayes's inauguration. General Dix, resigning from the veterans' national committee, urged members to maintain their organization, sustain Hayes, and uphold Republican principles "in any future political canvass." Under De Kay's efficient supervision, county and state organizers continued their work.[57]

Revived congressional interest in servicemen led Washington claim agents to hope for passage of their bills. Logan, a lame duck, was still their great hope; he made determined efforts to push a bounty measure through before his term expired. Congress seemed

[55] New York *Tribune*, January 15, 1878; David T. Bunker to McClellan, June 18, 1878, McClellan MSS., 2d Ser., XXXII; *id.* to *id.*, August 17, 1878, *ibid.*; letters dated 1879, *ibid.*, 1st Ser., XCVII, XCVIII.

[56] D. W. McLeod to Garfield, January 17, 1877, Garfield MSS.; *Cong. Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., December 12, 1878, p. 150.

[57] J. D. Defrees to Harrison, October 13, 1879, Harrison MSS.; New York *Times*, May 9, 1877; "Circular No. 21," New York, March 6, 1877, Garfield MSS.; Edward Hayes to Garfield, May 12, 1877, *ibid.*; Reid to *id.*, April 2, 1877, *ibid.*

little disposed to make further bounty concessions, however, so the agents concentrated their efforts on an "arrears" bill which would date pension payments from discharge and pay the back pensions in a lump sum. They organized lobbies to work on Congress. The "Pensioners' Committee," established in 1875, showered veterans with thousands of petitions, resolutions, and pamphlets, and influenced state legislatures to choose complaisant senators. Under this pressure the House passed a bill early in 1877, but the Senate failed to act on the measure.[58]

Redoubling their efforts, claim attorneys entreated soldiers to agitate. In October, 1877, George E. Lemon, one of Washington's principal agents, began publication of his veterans' newspaper, the Washington *National Tribune*, to demand bounties and arrears.[59] A close second was N. W. Fitzgerald, with his soldier's journal; other agents published similar periodicals in their determination to arouse the volunteers.

In response, veterans did exert pressure upon Congress. Even the Grand Army, which had shown little interest in pensions beyond its 1874 resolutions favoring increases in every grade, sanctioned the measure. Commander in Chief John C. Robinson brought it to the attention of department commanders, and some encampments gave the measure official endorsement. Moreover, Robinson called the national encampment's attention to the bill. Perhaps it was the claim agents' clamor that frightened Congress. One member later commented that "Democrats were urged to vote for it by Democrats because it would give them the soldier vote, as the Senate would defeat it anyhow; and Republicans were urged by Republicans to vote for it, as it would get ahead of the Democrats for the soldier vote and the Senate would defeat it anyhow." When the Democratic House passed an arrears bill, the agents turned the full force of their attack upon the Senate. During the summer of 1878 they urged veterans to extract promises of support from the twenty-five senatorial candidates. Senator

[58] *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong. 2 Sess., January 31–March 3, 1878, pp. 1122, 2172, 2174, 2177; *Proceedings First to Fourteenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 413–14, 481; William Henry Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions in the United States* (New York, 1918), 156; Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 67.

[59] Washington *National Tribune*, October, November, December, 1877, February, April, 1878; *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 2 Sess., January 31–March 3, 1877, pp. 1122, 2172–80.

John J. Ingalls of Kansas, nettled by charges that he opposed the soldiers' interests, championed the bill in the Senate, where it passed by a vote of 44 to 4.[60]

There was no possibility that Hayes would follow Grant's example. The President, who all his political life derived benefits from his efforts in the veterans' behalf, was a sincere zealot where pensions were concerned. He later wrote, "I signed it, not because to veto it would have been ineffectual, but because it was right. It was a measure necessary to keep good faith with the soldier. . . . We could not afford—we ought not—to haggle with them." What if there was danger of frauds? There had been many others, and always because of defective legislation. Pension frauds could be prevented if the government would cross-examine witnesses. "The failure of the Government to protect itself against frauds is no reason for evading just obligations." [61]

But the government took no precaution against frauds, and the Treasury was to pay out vast sums for claims based on flimsy and foolish grounds. The ex parte system of evidence encouraged the presentation of dishonest claims, while the arrears act, because of its large first payment to new pensioners, stimulated veterans to find grounds for applications. Many senators did not realize the bill's enormous cost until it became law, when they accused Ingalls and others of misrepresenting its expense. By 1885 the Treasury had paid $179,000,000 under this act, aside from the payments resulting from the new claims it inspired.[62]

The new law had an immediate effect upon veterans as well as claim agents. Soldiers who had been indifferent to pensions saw what a little agitation could accomplish. It was the attorneys rather than the veterans who had demanded arrears, but now the cupidity of the latter was aroused. They would need little urging to unite behind further demands. Claim agents, their appetite for fatter

[60] *Proceedings First to Fourteenth National Encampments*, 300, 521, 522; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1878, pp. 55, 57; *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*, 1878, p. 36; *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., January 21, 1886, p. 825; Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 54, 56, 57, 70; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 161, 163.

[61] Hayes to Hon. William Henry Smith, December 14, 1881, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, IV, 54.

[62] William H. Glasson, *History of Military Pension Legislation in the United States* in *Columbia University Studies in History, Economics and Public Law*, XII, No. 3 (New York, 1900), 96, 98, 103.

fees whetted by success, expanded their program. Lemon shouted for bounty-equalization legislation.

Editor Lemon divided his fulminations between appeals to the veterans and threats to the parties. He begged soldiers to support his paper that it might become a mighty influence in their interests. If 250,000 subscribed, he promised, they could give "orders to 'the Powers that be.' " Urging veterans to flood Congress with bounty petitions, he proclaimed that because of the approaching presidential campaign neither party would dare refuse a united demand. Then Lemon turned upon the politicians and threatened that should the Greenbackers advocate bounties the veterans would support them. He warned: ". . . the . . . Greenback party already pulls a tremendous vote, and with the addition of the solid soldier's vote the election would surely be thrown into the House. . . ." [63]

The Arrears Act had at least one more important effect: the enhanced political importance of the Pension Bureau. Commissioner John A. Bentley, trying to deal efficiently with the enormously increased business of his office, incurred the displeasure of the agents. As early as November, 1877, Editor Lemon began denouncing Bentley's proposed reforms in the examination of claimants, and in every issue he continued his virulent attack.[64]

The proximity of election day spurred congressmen to greater efforts in behalf of veterans. Iowa's Representative James B. Weaver championed a bill granting soldiers the difference between the gold and the currency value of their army pay. Democrats vied with Republicans in expressing enthusiasm for bounty equalization. Logan, back in Congress, urged his inevitable bounty bill and promised to publicize those "who are not friends of the soldiers." All this activity was purely for effect; both parties believed the Arrears Act to be as much of a concession as veterans could expect. Neither made any promise in its campaign platform. The Democrats even forgot the usual expression of gratitude, while Republicans merely stated that it was the people's "sacred duty" to "do them honor." The National Greenback-Labor party,

[63] Washington *National Tribune,* March, April, May, July, August, November, December, 1879.

[64] Oliver, *Civil War Pensions,* 77; Washington *National Tribune,* November, 1877, February, March, April, May, 1878, May, December, 1879.

which Lemon had used as a bugbear to frighten Republicans, was no more obliging. Its platform charged that Republicans had discriminated against the veteran "in favor of the bondholder," but it offered nothing.[65]

As convention time approached, Republican politicians made extensive use of veterans' associations to push their respective favorites into the limelight. From 1878 on, General Garfield received numerous invitations to speak at Grand Army and other veterans' reunions. The Grant enthusiasts used veterans' demonstrations most extensively; soldier ovations formed an important part of the receptions staged by politicians in 1879 when the general returned from Europe. And now the Grand Army returned to its original function. Iowa's commander appointed an escort to meet Grant upon his arrival from San Francisco and to conduct him through the state. At Philadelphia, G.A.R. posts held a great campfire in his honor.[66]

General Logan, one of the "senatorial triumvirate" working for Grant's nomination, called the veterans aboard the general's band wagon. Early in 1880 Logan found an opportunity in the Fitz-John Porter case to make a four-day speech in Congress, rekindling war animosities for his own political benefit as well as Grant's. Ever since the court-martial verdict ejected Porter from the army and deprived him of citizenship, he had worked untiringly for vindication. Hayes authorized what Grant had steadily refused: a military commission to review the case. After this commission exonerated Porter, the question of restoring him to the army rolls became a heated party question, and Logan was the most vociferous of the measure's opponents. He made the most of his tirade in Congress; from Grand Army posts he ob-

[65] New York *Tribune*, December 16, 1879, January 14, February 17, 1880; Washington *National Tribune*, April, 1880; *Republican Party, Campaign Text Book* (Washington, 1880), 174; *Our Presidential Candidates and Political Compendium . . . the Proceedings of the Three National Conventions—the Three Letters of Acceptance* (Newark, N.J., 1880), 11, 82, 92, 159; Chicago *Tribune*, June 11, 1880.

[66] Chill W. Hazzard to Garfield, March 6, 1879, Garfield MSS.; Barnum to *id.*, May 8, 1879, *ibid.*; H. C. Corbin to *id.*, November 8, 1879, *ibid.*; New York *Tribune*, November 15, 1879; Garfield MSS., 1878–80; "General Orders No. 9," Atlantic, Iowa, in *Journal of Ninth Encampment (Including 1st to 8th) Iowa G.A.R.*, 47; Joseph R. C. Ward, *History of George G. Meade Post No. 1, Department of Pennsylvania G.A.R.* (Philadelphia, 1889), 79–90; Henry Clay Trumbull, *War Memories of an Army Chaplain* (New York, 1898), 325.

tained membership lists for use in mailing copies to veterans.[67]

In a final effort to make it appear that the volunteers demanded Grant, the bloody-shirt wavers who championed him summoned a soldiers' meeting in Chicago just before the regular convention assembled. Since they carefully avoided any hint of their purpose in the call, veterans in some cases elected Blaine delegates. As a result, Haverly's Theatre resounded with an uproar when representatives of the veterans' campaign organization tried to push through resolutions urging Grant's nomination. One delegate announced that as a Maine Grand Army representative he objected to the choice of any candidate. About three-fifths of the delegates favored the former President, and in a scene of considerable confusion a resolution was passed declaring the general to be the veterans' choice. The assembly conceded, however, that since "the success of the party is far more essential to the country than the selection of any one man" the servicemen would support any Republican nominee.[68] The gathering received little publicity and apparently exerted no influence on the regular convention. But if the Republican convention ignored the halfhearted recommendation of its veterans' side show, there was no reason why its dark-horse selection, General James A. Garfield, should be less acceptable than Grant to the nation's heroes.

An increasing number of Democrats were concluding that their best prospect for victory lay in a military ticket. At the beginning of the Grant boom, many party papers declared that Hancock would be the general's strongest opponent. The convention, accepting Tilden's refusal at face value, chose Hancock, confident that this time Republicans could not raise the cry of loyalty to the Union. Hancock, dubbed "superb" in one of McClellan's war dispatches, was "one of the finest figures in uniform in the whole country" and was withal an idol of the Army of the Potomac. General Sherman wrote, "This is a strong ticket, the strongest the Democrats could possibly make, because it will divide the soldier

[67] Washburne to Logan, February 20, 1880, Logan MSS.; Logan, *Reminiscences*, 397; Fitz John Porter to McClellan, June 3, 1880, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCVIII; W. D. Matney to Logan, March 30, 1880, Logan MSS.; Howe, *Chester A. Arthur*, 251–53; McClure, *Lincoln and Men of War Times*, 343–47.

[68] New York *Tribune*, June 2, 1880; Chicago *Tribune*, June 2, 1880; New York *World*, June 1, 2, 1880; Hazzard to Garfield, June 16, 1880, Garfield MSS.

vote, and will strip the Democrats of the fear lest the South should regain control of the country." [69]

Hancock's leadership gave Democrats confidence in competing for soldier support; their efforts were less defensive than in previous campaigns. Taking the initiative at the outset, the party textbook alleged that while Republicans had fought pension legislation and discriminated against soldiers in appointments, Democrats had passed the arrears bill and protected soldiers from exorbitant pension fees. Two well-known generals indicated the prominence to be accorded veterans when they fired the campaign's opening guns. General Slocum challenged the Republican charge that Hancock was "only a soldier," untrained for civil office. General Ewing, emphasizing the difference between the reputations of the two soldier-candidates, asserted that Garfield was tainted with the corruption that had disgraced his party. This was to be the Democratic keynote. Later Sickles hobbled into the Democratic camp to sing Hancock's praises.[70]

Leaders of the Democratic veterans' campaign society had maintained their clubs in more or less efficient working order and were eager to battle for a soldier's election. But their organization work was tardy. Late in July an executive committee reorganized under the title "National Association, Hancock Veterans" and unanimously elected McClellan president. The general immediately consulted Hancock, who advised the new commander to make his national headquarters nothing more than a "central Bureau" to collect statistics, give information to state organizations, and "collect the threads." Hancock listed several reasons for this advice: the state officers were already jealous of central interference; McClellan could not attend to all details; "the organization is too crude"; firm central control would not be "in accordance with the Democratic idea." Moreover, Republicans

[69] New York *Tribune*, May 5, 1879; Chauncey M. Depew, *My Memories of Eighty Years* (New York, 1922), 107; W. T. Sherman [to his wife?], June 24, 1880, in Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of Sherman*, 389; Wallace E. Davies, "The Mexican War Veterans as an Organized Group," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXXV (1948), 232.

[70] National Democratic Committee, *Democratic Party, Campaign Text Book* (New York, 1880), 344–61; Louis Lynch to Garfield, June 14, 1880, Garfield MSS.; E. C. Northrup to *id.*, June 21, 1880, *ibid.*; New York *World*, June 27, 30, July 29, September 11, October 20, 27, 1880.

would be certain to make McClellan "the target of the Campaign" if he "took the lead." [71]

McClellan apparently followed this counsel scrupulously. There is no evidence, in fact, that he took any part in the society's work. The general may have been chilled by Hancock's seeming disinclination to share the veterans' cheers with a more famous officer; he did not participate in the campaign until its close, although he received numerous appeals to speak at the society's rallies. Finally, in October, he consented to preside at a gathering of Hancock Veterans in New York. The boys cheered him wildly as he assured them that "the Democratic has never been, the Republican has always been a sectional party." [72]

Correspondence with the association's state commanders was carried on by the executive committee's chairman, General William Franklin Smith, who held the reins of direction lightly. The committee's two secretaries aided in the distribution of material. Clubs developed rapidly under the direction of enthusiastic local organizers. One worker wrote that the organization would be used as the "grand lever to move Milwaukee County once more into the democratic ranks"; another reported that the New Haven club boasted seven hundred members. The work of organization was especially thorough in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, New Jersey, and Connecticut. General Rosecrans, California commander, expected to enroll five thousand in San Francisco, ten thousand in the state. Leaders boasted that many Republicans were flocking to their standard and prophesied that Hancock would receive "the bulk of the soldier vote." [73]

As in previous campaigns, local workers arranged rallies, parades, and torchlight processions and distributed the national committee's circulars, as well as the caps and white vests. The chameleon Benjamin F. Butler, until this time a member of the Republican veterans' organization, turned his influence to Hancock as a member of General Smith's committee.[74]

[71] Charles C. Wheeler to McClellan, July 31, 1880, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser., XCIX; W. C. Hancock to *id.*, August 4, 1880, *ibid.*

[72] Letters dated July–November, 1880, *ibid.;* New York *World*, October 14, 27, 1880.

[73] Gen. T. Kilby Smith to Vilas, August 23, 1880, Vilas MSS.; A. J. Langworthy to Vilas, September 10, 1880, *ibid.;* E. M. Graves to Butler, October 20, 1880, Butler MSS.; New York *World*, August 12, 14, 26, 1880.

[74] James F. Larkin to McClellan, September 9, 1880, McClellan MSS., 1st Ser.,

Democrats even invaded the Grand Army in their quest for veterans' votes; a New York *World* reporter attended a campfire in New York's Schutzen Park and found to his joy that many would vote for Hancock. Some 200 of Dahlgren Post's 340 members, who had been unanimous for Grant, would cast Hancock ballots. Even more encouraging was the atmosphere at the New Jersey encampment, to which almost three thousand veterans flocked with their families. They gave cold reception to Republican propaganda in General Kilpatrick's address, cheered Hancock, and displayed his picture. The correspondent estimated that at least eighteen hundred were "Republican Hancock veterans." He commented that many of the post commanders, who were Republican officeholders, were working for Garfield, but the rank and file were "Hancock-mad." The *World* featured these reports prominently on its first page.[75]

Republican veterans' leaders were uninhibited by scruples regarding centralization; their national headquarters provided efficient direction to state organizations. Drake De Kay had worked diligently since the campaign of 1876 to maintain contacts with state leaders and keep local clubs supplied with propaganda. De Kay completed his preparations well in advance of the campaign; a bronze badge was adopted in 1878, while late in 1879 the proofs of his first campaign circular went out for approval of state commanders. When Garfield resigned the central-committee chairmanship after his nomination, Grant accepted the position, and attention was henceforth focused upon him. But De Kay continued to be the society's driving force. Between January and June he sent out "some 47,000 appeals." [76]

XCIX; Major P. M. Haverty to Vilas, September 13, 1880, Vilas MSS.; Theodore S. West to *id.*, October 1, 1880, *ibid.;* McMahon to Butler, July 16, 1880, Butler MSS.; William F. Smith to *id.*, August 29, 1880, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, September 22, 1880, *ibid.;* Col. C. C. Wheeler to *id.*, September 1, 1880, *ibid.;* A. P. Martin to *id.*, October 1, 1880, *ibid.;* New York *World*, August 12, 14, 26, 1880.

[75] New York *World*, August 17, 18, 1880.

[76] De Kay to Garfield, May 1, 1878, Garfield MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, June 3, 1878, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, August 1, 1878, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, August 8, 1878, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, December 16, 1878, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, December 8, 1879, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, June 18, 1880, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, August 30, 1880, *ibid.;* circular, John A. Dix and De Kay "to the Veteran Soldiers and Sailors of the United States," March 6, 1877, *ibid.;* S. D. Childs, Jr., and Co., Badge Committee, "to the Members of the Union of the United States," May, 1878, *ibid.;* circular, John R. Thompson and others to "All Union Soldiers and Sailors," May, 1880, *ibid.;* De Kay to Hawley, December

De Kay reported that response to his January appeal had been satisfactory, but many soldiers refused to join until they saw the results of the nominating convention. He therefore urged a second general circular. With Grant's consent, the secretary issued a telegram and a second circular over the general's signature, the latter in the form of military orders. Grant's leadership gave the association considerable newspaper publicity, but not all of it was favorable. The Washington *Post* termed the action "rather diminutive potatoes for 'the greatest living American,' " and suggested that it smacked of the "ward politician." It was the first time in our history, the paper stated, that a former president had assumed leadership of a campaign organization. But the Republican press published the order with approval and reported that veterans "hailed it with great enthusiasm." Certainly the work of organization proceeded rapidly. By September the New York Department, which provided a military system of divisions, companies, and squads, claimed fifty thousand members. "In the language of General Grant," wrote one enthusiast, "we are pushing things." And at all the society's demonstrations, the soldiers' pulses quickened to the popular "Marching through Georgia," which became the Republican campaign song.[77]

Both veterans' organizations planned the usual October rallies, and this time the Democrats staged their assembly first. They considered it highly successful, but Republicans termed it a "fizzle." The Chicago *Tribune* gleefully publicized the irritation of a few

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8, 1879, Hawley MSS.; *id.* to Chandler, February 15, 1879, Zachariah Chandler MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, March 5, 1879, *ibid.*

[77] De Kay to Garfield, June 16, 1880, Garfield MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, December 8, 1879, *ibid.;* Fisher to *id.*, July 17, 1880, *ibid.;* telegram, Grant to De Kay, July 21, 1880, *ibid.;* "General Orders No. 1," circular signed by Grant and De Kay, July 22, 1880, *ibid.;* Capt. Henry A. Beatty to Garfield, September 20, 1880, *ibid.;* Samuel Johnson and others to *id.*, April 28, 1880, *ibid.;* William W. Last to *id.*, October 19, 1880, *ibid.;* Thomas B. Wildes to *id.*, July 28, 1880, *ibid.;* Robert L. Orr to *id.*, July 27, 1880, and accompanying circular, *ibid.;* *Constitution and By Laws of the National Veteran Club* (pamphlet, Washington, November, 1880), *ibid.;* circular, National Veteran Club, headquarters, Washington, D.C., May, 1880, *ibid.;* circular, C. Tannehill to Sherman's Brigade, Ohio, undated, *ibid.;* C. H. Gregg to Garfield, July 31, 1880, *ibid.;* Edward H. Noble to *id.*, August 10, 1880, *ibid.;* H. D. Norton to *id.*, June 9, 1880, *ibid.;* Asa Bird Gardner to *id.*, October 30, 1880, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune*, July 25, September 7, 9, October 28, 1880; Chicago *Tribune*, July 27, 1880; De Kay to Hawley, December 8, 1879, Hawley MSS.; *id.* to Chandler, February 15, 1879, Zachariah Chandler MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, March 5, 1879, *ibid.*

veterans when they observed a youth carrying a Confederate flag. At the Republican rally, as always, blood-drenched shirts were waved to tatters. The mammoth parade was three times as long as the Democratic procession; this made the Republican press happy.[78]

The aggressive Republican association completely outmaneuvered its opponent. More efficient organization may have contributed to Republican success. Undoubtedly Grant's name was a great advantage, although he took little part in the rallies. His appearance at a Decatur gathering created tremendous enthusiasm. Akron, Ohio, veterans were so "stirred up" by his order that they requested Boys in Blue organization. Clearly Republicans were enjoying considerable success in blocking the Hancock appeal to the soldiers' vote. One zealot wrote that the Democratic effort to capture Philadelphia veterans had been a miserable failure: "The reorganization of the Boys in Blue . . . has cost us money, but it is doing us great good. . . . Nearly all the soldiers in our city are enrolled. . . ." From New York came the report, "The Hancock boom has already commenced to subside and very few soldiers . . . unless those who have always been democrats, can be induced to accept his leadership." [79]

The variations that De Kay and his cohorts found for the old theme of "Democratic treason" provided another factor in Republican success. If Democrats had believed that they could check the disloyalty charge with a Union military candidate, they were sadly disillusioned. The Boys in Blue writers, to be sure, hesitated to attack a soldier-candidate. They cleared that hurdle by insisting that Hancock was only the party's dupe. "We hold no controversy with General Hancock, for he is a good soldier," admitted an Illinois circular. "Our only controversy is with the party that nominates him." "A new figure-head, but the same old hulk," a New York broadside scornfully commented. "A thousand Union Generals . . . could not palliate . . . the terrors and the torture, the bloodshed and massacre, with which the Democratic party has

[78] M. D. Manson to Vilas, September 20, 1880, Vilas MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, October 4, 7, 9, 1880; New York *Tribune*, October 1, 9, 1880.

[79] Chicago *Tribune*, October 7, 1880; John Cessna to Garfield, September 23, 1880, Garfield MSS.; Charles K. Fisher to *id.*, July 17, 1880, *ibid.;* Wildes to *id.*, July 28, 1880, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune*, July 11, 1880.

prepared, and again sets in the field, a Solid South against the Soldiers and Sailors of the patriotic North." [80]

Having made it clear that they had no quarrel with Hancock, the organizers proceeded to denounce the Democrats for treason with the same venom as in previous campaigns. The New York committee warned soldiers that the party was as much their enemy in 1880 as during the war. Accused by Democrats of waving the bloody shirt, an Illinois committee inquired: ". . . who has a better right? It became bloody in defense of the national flag. . . . It is the same old Rebellion. . . ." The call to the Indianapolis convention proclaimed, "This is not the first time the Union blue has been used as a decoy to the Union soldiers into a Rebel ambush." Duly impressed, the assembled heroes resolved that they would not "be decoyed by a disguise in the person of General Hancock." Some alarm was expressed because Greenbackers were assuring soldiers that the government had violated its contract by paying them in depreciated currency. But the organizers made no answer to that charge; they concentrated upon the single point of Democratic treason.[81]

This attack was by no means confined to Boys in Blue propaganda. In the "Democratic Hatred of Union Soldiers" chapter of the campaign textbook, Republicans charged that their opponents not only had obstructed bounties and pensions but had appointed Rebels to office and planned to pension Confederates. Blaine is reported to have counseled against continued waving of the bloody shirt, but in a campaign where two parties of almost-equal strength refuse to give major issues real discussion, some smoke screen is necessary; so Republican papers took their readers back to the war period. Not sharing the compunctions of the veterans' or-

[80] Circular, Col. Edward Anderson to "Comrade," August 20, 1880, Garfield MSS.; circular, John Cochrane and others, "to the Union Soldiers and Sailors of the State of New York," accompanying letter, J. C. Reed to Garfield, July 16, 1880, *ibid.*

[81] Circular, Cochrane and others, "to the Union Soldiers and Sailors of the State of New York," July 16, 1880, *ibid.;* circular, July 27, 1880, *ibid.;* circular letter No. II, Edward Anderson, to "Comrade," September 1, 1880 (penciled note on circular, W. A. Schmitt to Garfield), *ibid.;* Boys in Blue campaign songs, July 8, August 16, 25, 1880, *ibid.;* W. H. Mason to Garfield, July 12, 1880, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune,* August 16, October 1, 1880; Chicago *Tribune,* October 4, 7, 1880.

ganizers about attacking a Union general, they made Hancock the villain of their inspired fiction.[82]

As the campaign progressed, these papers gradually worked up to a crescendo of villification, and more than a few of their editorials and articles were directed specifically to the veterans. The Chicago *Tribune*, for example, started out in comparatively mild fashion with the argument that since Hancock was a professional soldier with no experience in political life, he was no match for his citizen-soldier opponent. Then the paper began to attack the general's loyalty. When McClellan was removed from command of the Army of the Potomac, it charged, Hancock proposed to several other generals that they disregard the order and march on Washington to depose Lincoln. This would have been done "had McClellan the nerve of Hancock." A favorite charge was the one that Hancock's program at New Orleans, nullifying that of Sheridan, smacked of treason: "He . . . deserted his comrades and sold himself to the South as an eager and willing tool to undo all the work that had been done in the field. He was the confederate of ex-Rebels in 1868, and now has his reward." The newspaper also made much of the Republican assertion that, early in 1877, Hancock offered his services "as a military commander" to "sustain Tilden in his claim to the Presidency." [83]

The Chicago *Tribune* took pleasure also in attacking Hancock's conduct at the time of Mrs. Surratt's execution. Democrats, capitalizing on a growing public feeling that the woman accused of plotting against Lincoln might have been hung unjustly, were claiming that Hancock had begged Johnson to be merciful. On the day of the hanging, they stated, the general stationed cavalry between the White House and the scene of execution so that a possible last-moment reprieve could be hastened on its way. The Chicago *Tribune* also sensed a change in sentiment since the trial, for it made no attack on Hancock for leniency to a convicted

[82] *Republican Campaign Text Book*, 1880, pp. 115–244; William C. Hudson, *Random Recollections of an Old Political Reporter* (New York, 1911), 112; Howe, *Chester A. Arthur*, 114; Harrison Cook Thomas, *The Return of the Democratic Party to Power in 1884* (New York, 1919), 55.

[83] Chicago *Tribune*, June 24, 25, 26, 28, July 3, 5, 9, 10, 13, 24, 26, 28, 1880; New York *Tribune*, July 29, 1880; Hancock, *Reminiscences of Hancock*, 108–10.

conspirator against the President. Denying instead that Hancock had been sympathetic, it sent a reporter to interview Mrs. Surratt's daughter. Mrs. William P. Torney, "a rather tall and slender lady . . . of a rather nervous temperament, bearing in face and expression the traces of the terrible ordeal she passed through fifteen years ago," was glad to bolster the *Tribune*'s position. She announced her belief that Hancock had desired her mother's execution and "would not so much as have lifted his finger to prevent it." Joyfully the *Tribune* featured the interview on its first page.

Late in July this paper began attacking Hancock's military leadership, asserting that "he was notoriously a rough, coarse, hard officer." He sneered at hospitalized patients and "often wantonly deprived soldiers of food." It published veterans' letters citing instances of the general's brutality and profanity. According to one of these stories, Hancock came upon some troops putting a bridge across a waist-deep stream. With "shocking" curses, he forced them to wade. "The Democratic press of Ohio has been trying to find a denial," gloated the *Tribune*. The paper rejoiced when Wisconsin papers published portions of a fifteen-year-old book charging the general with "heartless conduct," and it rejoiced also at finding no refutation "from Hancock or his friends." All these revelations of Hancock's "fearfully" quick temper, it smugly remarked, would have "a widespread and fatal effect upon the soldiers' vote during the coming campaign." [84]

By September the *Tribune* was ready to give attention to the Democratic assumption that Hancock was responsible for Union victory at Gettysburg. Nothing could have been further from the truth, it found; the battle would have been lost had not a subordinate postponed obedience to the general's orders. An editorial begged "every old soldier" to read the account of Hancock's quarrel with this officer and be convinced that it proved the general a blundering fool.[85]

And throughout the Republican press, interspersed with these charges, was stressed the constant warning that Hancock was under the control of a solid, treasonable South. Vice-presidential

[84] Chicago *Tribune*, July 22, August 4, 10, 11, 13, 25, 1880.
[85] *Ibid.*, September 17, 23, October 11, 30, 1880.

candidate General Chester A. Arthur sounded this note in his letter of acceptance. The New York *Tribune* believed that veterans would scorn Democratic efforts to enroll them in Hancock clubs; they knew Hancock's election would "put the very men in power who fought these veteran soldiers and the cause they represent." Nast's double-page cartoon, showing the handsome general sorrowfully regarding the burial place of Confederate dead at Gettysburg and captioned "The Silent (Democratic) Majority," effectively underlined this argument. So also did Wade Hampton's tactless remark at Staunton, Virginia, that Hancock represented the principle for which Lee and Johnson had fought. General Hancock's statement that "when the rebellion was crushed the heresy of secession in every form and every incident went down forever" proved unavailing; the Chicago *Tribune* termed it "a denial which is a confession." The general's assurance that he would veto any bills for payment of southern claims or pensions received similar treatment. This remark presented the "whole subject" in a "new and startling aspect"; surely it was unnecessary for the people to "throw themselves upon the mercy of a veto which may possibly fail at the critical moment." [86]

These virulent attacks put the Democratic press on the defensive; it was forced to turn its attention from Garfield's connection with the Crédit Mobilier scandal to challenge the accusations against Hancock. The New York *World*, for example, devoted considerable space to a defense of the general's policy in Louisiana. The paper expressed particular indignation over a charge involving insubordination. In the 1876 electoral dispute, the Republican press insisted, Hancock had informed Sherman that he would take orders only from Tilden. A special messenger hastened to General Sherman in Dakota for permission to publish his correspondence with "the Superb." Hancock's letter of December 28, 1876, and Sherman's reply, published by the *World*, certainly furnished no substantiation for Republican assertions. The paper announced that its publication of these letters had a

[86] New York *World*, July 19, 1880; New York *Tribune*, July 29, 1880; *Harper's Weekly, A Journal of Civilization* (New York, 1857–1916), XXIV (1880), 552–53; Paine, *Th. Nast, his Period and his Pictures*, 436; Chicago *Tribune*, September 9, 27, 29, October 6, 1880.

"dispiriting effect" on Republicans; but if this was the case, they concealed their dejection well.[87]

A corollary of the South-controlled-party argument was the claim that Hancock's victory would mean no more pensions or appointments for Union soldiers. Every day throughout the latter part of the campaign, the Wade Hampton remark shared the leading position on the New York *Tribune* editorial page with a letter, reportedly to a constituent, from F. E. Beltzhoover, Democratic congressman. Beltzhoover regretted that no pension bill could pass because the House was Democratic and a "Rebel General" headed the senatorial pension committee. Further, newspapers charged that when Democrats took control of the House, the roll of Union soldiers "began to be transformed to a roster of Confederate troops"; they cited instances of Democratic unwillingness to appoint Union veterans. In the face of all these evils that would follow Hancock's victory, why should the veteran "prefer him to General Garfield," who had not been fed, clothed and paid by the government and was therefore under no obligation to defend it "save that which his own love of country imposed upon him"? Thus they capitalized on the fact that Garfield had been a citizen-soldier, while Hancock was an officer in the Regular Army.[88]

And finally Grant aided in the task of destroying Hancock's character. On October 5 the New York *Times*, the Chicago *Tribune*, and the Cincinnati *Gazette* published the Reverend C. Fowler's account of an interview with the former President. According to Fowler, Grant stated that ever since 1864, when Hancock received one vote in the Democratic presidential convention, he had "had the bee in his bonnet and shaped everything to win Democratic and Southern favor." In New Orleans Hancock had reinstated corrupt officials dismissed by Sheridan "long enough to enable them to rob the state" of some $7,000,000. This story created a sensation; it was the "universal topic of conversation,"

[87] New York *World*, June 27, July 7, 15, 31, August 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 17, 25, September 12, 1880; W. T. Sherman to Hancock, December 17, 1876, in New York *World*, August 27, 1880; *id.* to *id.*, January 2, 1877, *ibid.*; Hancock to Sherman, December 28, 1876, *ibid.*

[88] Chicago *Tribune*, August 4, September 9, 1880; New York *Tribune*, July 29, September 21, 1880.

Harpers' Weekly, XXIV (August 28, 1880)

THE "SILENT (DEMOCRATIC) MAJORITY."
General Hancock will miss them on Election Day.

while Republican workers claimed that it would do more good than a hundred speeches. The national committee's chairman joyfully assured Garfield that "Grant's utterances on Hancock are the most valuable contribution which has been made to the campaign. . . . I have heard him tell this story a great many times and I am now delighted to see it in print." [89]

Hancock reportedly wired Grant for confirmation or denial. Grant admitted to reporters that Hancock probably had nothing to do with the $7,000,000 steal and accused Fowler of garbling his language. But Fowler, who had received Grant's permission to publish, insisted on the correctness of his quotations. When Hancock declined to take public notice of the matter, the irascible General Sickles rushed to his defense with an open letter to the chairman of the Republican Executive Committee.[90]

While the Republican press strove to make it impossible for a veteran to support Hancock, politicians were exploiting ostensibly nonpartisan reunions to an even greater extent than in previous campaigns. In June, Grant and Sheridan attended a reunion of some forty thousand soldiers in Milwaukee, where the Loyal Legion entertained them; in August, President Hayes played a prominent role in a reunion at Columbus, Ohio, for which the War Department contributed fifteen hundred tents, as well as cannon and flags.[91]

Garfield received numerous invitations from nonpolitical veterans' societies to deliver addresses or attend reunions. One Republican believed that his presence at an Indiana gathering "might be the means of giving us the state." W. W. Dudley, Indiana Republican committee member as well as chairman of the Grand Army's state invitation council, urged Garfield to attend the society's encampment. For a candidate who planned to spend the campaign quietly at home, Garfield gave considerable attention to these reunions. He attended the Army of the Cumberland's banquet in his honor and in September addressed the reunion of

[89] Chicago *Tribune*, October 5, 6, 7, 1880; Marshall Jewell to Garfield, October 7, 1880, Garfield MSS.

[90] Chicago *Tribune*, October 7, 8, 9, 12, 1880; New York *World*, October 6, 7, 8, 16, 1880; Sickles to W. A. Fowler, October 6, 1880, *ibid.*, October 7, 1880.

[91] Chicago *Tribune*, June 11, 1880; New York *Tribune*, July 20, August 11, 12, 13, 1880.

that group. On July 4 he spoke at the dedication of a soldiers' monument at Painesville, Ohio; and during the summer he attended two more reunions. Campaign workers brought servicemen to his home in Mentor, Ohio, in order "to keep up interest." A Cleveland, Ohio, Republican asked permission to bring the veterans of his county "by special train Thursday. . . . these men are scattered all over the county, they will constitute a leaven to keep the whole loaf warm until after the Presidential election." At the close of the campaign the party sent twelve hundred veterans by special train to visit the candidate.[92]

The continuation, throughout the campaign, of the claim agents' violent attack on Pension Commissioner Bentley caused Republicans considerable discomfort. No longer could the party expect gratuitous help from veterans' papers; their attorney-owners demanded concessions for support. Bentley's comments in his report of 1878 regarding the propaganda of the agents and their papers angered the group; Lemon, ignoring the campaign, savagely attacked the commissioner in every issue of his *National Tribune.* Democratic congressmen had eagerly joined in this attack on the administration, and with such enthusiasm that an investigation was instituted. The examining committee did not report before adjournment, but the New York *World* confided to its readers that the evidence revealed the administration to be the soldier's friend only when he was "an electioneering soldier." The committee believed that Bentley's "spy system was politically used to oppress Democratic soldiers on allegations of fraud." [93]

This constant barrage of invective from Lemon, Democrats, and Greenbackers undoubtedly influenced soldiers. Republican politicians began to fear that unless Bentley were removed, they would lose many veterans' votes. One wrote from Illinois, "There are ten thousand applicants for pensions in this State and $\frac{9}{10}$ of

[92] Dudley to Garfield, August 28, 1880, Garfield MSS.; W. S. Newbury, to *id.*, June 23, 1880, *ibid.;* M. D. Leggett to *id.*, October 14, 1880, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune,* June 18, July 5, October 22, 1880; Chicago *Tribune,* September 23, 1880; New York *World,* July 5, 1880; Harrison Scrap Books (1853–1901; part of Harrison MSS., Library of Congress), I, September 23, 1880; Theodore Clark Smith, *The Life and Letters of James Abram Garfield* (New Haven, 1925), 2 vols., II, 1031.

[93] New York *World,* September 17, 1880; John Matt, Jr., to Garfield, July 27, 1880, Garfield MSS.; J. A. Bentley to *id.*, September 21, 1880, *ibid.*

them are republican and who will vote for Weaver if Bentley is not removed. . . ." Another warned, "There is [*sic*] Eleven thousand Soldiers in Michigan who will Vote solid for the man who will remove Bentley if Hancock is elected he will be sure to be removed." [94]

Bentley himself was disturbed, but considered a vigorous defense a better reply than resignation. When he tried to publish an address unmasking the claim agents' motives, however, he learned that he dared say nothing against them because Republicans "were trying to silence their voices and get them to work for the republican nominees." Bentley acquiesced for the moment; but when Democrats joined the attack, he announced that the time had come for his party to defend his policies as Republican measures. It should "shake off the Claim Agents and all connection and interest with them." This course would show that Democrats had "espoused the Claim Agents [*sic*] cause against the Bureau," and would do much to keep "the soldier vote firm with their friends." [95]

Since his party still refused to aid him, Bentley undertook his own vindication. He addressed an open letter to congressman William R. Myers, who had attacked him, and issued a circular to veterans defending himself against charges of delays in adjudicating claims. These were chargeable, he stated, to the inability of the War Department to furnish records rapidly or to the claimants' failure to supply evidence promptly. His office was doing its best under the existing system; cases would continue to accumulate until Congress furnished legislative relief. These two documents, he believed, would "cool off the pension fever a little." He made several trips to G.A.R. national headquarters at Philadelphia in an effort to win the support of that organization, some departments of which had expressed official condemnation for his "Sixty Surgeon Bill." Late in October he informed Garfield that his campaign had been successful; there was "a complete

[94] William J. Harris to Garfield, July 12, 1880, Garfield MSS.; Richard Whiteside to *id.*, October 13, 1880, *ibid.;* Lewis William to *id.*, July 19, 1880, *ibid.;* T. J. Parsons to *id.*, July 19, 1880, *ibid.;* Matt to *id.*, July 27, 1880, *ibid.;* W. B. Page to *id.*, September 1, 1880, *ibid.;* Milo B. Stevens to *id.*, July 12, 1880, *ibid.*

[95] Bentley to *id.*, August 18, 1880, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, September 21, 1880, *ibid.; id.* to Keyes, May 26, 1880, Keyes MSS.

revolution in the tone of the communications which are received at this Office from claimants and soldiers." But Bentley was over-optimistic. The attacks of claim agents, Democrats, and Greenbackers aroused so much hostility against him that his dismissal became inevitable. When Garfield later appointed W. W. Dudley as commissioner, he wrote that he regretted Bentley's removal but believed "the opposition" would "keep the office in a turmoil until a change is made." [96]

Undoubtedly numerous factors contributed to the victory of the citizen-soldier over the professional by the small plurality of 9,464 votes. Among these were the Republicans' extravagant campaign expenditures, their charge that Democrats favored free trade, Roscoe Conkling's belated but effective assistance, and the presence of the Greenback party in the field to take votes from Democrats. Important, too, was the revival of the bloody-shirt issue, which may have influenced many, especially veterans, against a candidate who was sympathetic to the South. Finally, there was the not-to-be-minimized determination of the Republican press and veterans' campaign organizers to frustrate the Democratic hope of winning for Hancock large numbers of those veterans who had supported Grant and Hayes. Chauncey M. Depew, indeed, believed that Grant's efforts won for Republicans "the whole of the old-soldier vote." While Hancock's presence on the ticket prevented Republicans from making a 100-per-cent sweep of the veterans, quite possibly their appeal to the boys, more aggressive than that of the Democrats, did make an important contribution to the result.[97]

Certainly it influenced their sons, who were just coming to voting age. A young man of 1880 later wrote that Republicans harangued every boy "to vote as his father or uncle or elder brother had shot; he obeyed as loyally as though he were on the battle line back in the '60's. . . . With such sentiments control-

[96] Bentley to Garfield, September 27, 1880, Garfield MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, October 4, 1880, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, October 28, 1880, *ibid.*; circular, signed by Bentley, October 1, 1880, Garfield MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, December, 1880; Garfield to Senator Philetus Sawyer, June 16, 1881, Garfield Letter Books.

[97] Howe, *Chester A. Arthur*, 123; Muzzey, *James G. Blaine*, 177; Stone, *They Also Ran*, 189; Donald Barr Chidsey, *The Gentleman from New York: a Life of Roscoe Conkling* (New Haven, 1935), 313; Smith, *Garfield*, II, 1043; Depew, *My Memories of Eighty Years*, 111.

ling my youthful spirit I could not conceive how Winfield Scott Hancock, a worthy Union General, could accept the nomination of the Democratic party." [98]

[98] Henry L. Stoddard, *As I Knew Them, Presidents and Politics from Grant to Coolidge* (New York, 1927), 49.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Hornets Build Their Nest

THE STEADILY REVIVING INTEREST of politicians in the veterans' vote, clearly manifested during the 1880 campaign, was one of several factors interacting to stimulate in former soldiers an increased enthusiasm for organization, as well as a determination to wrest further concessions from Congress. Another element was the arrears act, which, as has been mentioned, opened the veterans' eyes to the potentialities in united pressure, while merely whetting the claim agents' appetites. And the continued agitation of the most aggressive of these attorneys not only changed the attitude of the average serviceman to pensions; it was directly responsible for the head-over-heels expansion of the Grand Army and for a complete reversal in its official policy.

George Lemon, who exerted the most potent single influence on the veteran movement, was the son of a New York State farmer. Ambitious for an education, he had managed to enter the Polytechnic Institute at Troy, New York, when the second call for troops moved him to join the Union forces. Continued difficulty with a wound brought about his transference to Washington, where he relaxed from official duties by settling the accounts of his fellow servicemen. In this work he saw his career; he studied law, was graduated from Columbian University, and soon after his admission to the bar became known as a leading pension attorney. He added patents to his field with equal success. In October, 1877, Lemon began publication of the *National Tribune*, a veterans' newspaper that urged upon servicemen their right to pensions and advertised the abilities of one George Lemon as their agent. Lemon gradually enlarged and improved his enterprise, but it was not until he realized the potentialities of partner-

ship with the Grand Army that his circulation soared as the G.A.R. membership list lengthened. Probably even Lemon did not foresee the far-reaching results of this combination.

The G.A.R. had begun to expand, to be sure, before Lemon adopted its cause in his *National Tribune*. The turning point was reached in 1878, when the attorney general proudly contrasted a net gain of 216 members with the loss of 1,090 for the previous year. By the close of 1879 the society reported a membership of 44,802, while a year later it boasted 60,678. Several causes probably contributed to this gradual improvement: the end of the depression; the arrears act, sanctioned by Commander in Chief Robinson; and the society's rise in public esteem as it lived down its partisanship reputation and aroused sympathy for its annual Memorial Day ceremonies. Officers repeatedly congratulated the members on the Grand Army's mounting respectability. In 1881, Commander in Chief Louis Wagner suggested another reason: he attributed the expansion during his term to the increased activity of national officers in visiting departments.[1]

But it was not until Editor Lemon joined with Grand Army officials in a membership drive that the society began its mushroom growth. Before 1881 the *Tribune* gave the society little attention beyond a request in its first issue that members aid in procuring subscribers. In October, 1881, a few weeks after Lemon began weekly rather than monthly publication, he started a campaign to build up the organization. Proclaiming that every veteran should be a member, he declared, "By a little effort on the part of each comrade the present membership can be doubled within the next year, and as numbers are increased so will the benefits to be derived from belonging to the order be added to." [2]

Henceforth Lemon enthusiastically reported the society's growth, urged more energetic recruiting for members, and devoted a column to accounts of post and department activities. Soon he was boasting that his was the only journal to make a specialty of Grand Army news and that its circulation was "so

[1] *Proceedings 11th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 523; *Journal 15th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1881, pp. 746, 753; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 208; *Proceedings 12th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1878, p. 521; *Proceedings 13th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1879, p. 595.

[2] Washington *National Tribune*, November, 1877, October 15, 1881.

largely among the members . . . from Maine to California" that it was to all intents and purposes the society's national organ. Lemon gave considerable publicity to plans for the national encampment of 1882; his motive became clear when he expressed the hope that the delegates would urge pension measures upon Congress: "If the Grand Army is silent, who can blame Congress for indifference? . . . If our pensioners do not find a champion in the Grand Army, where shall they look for one?" At the encampment Lemon's representatives placed copies of the *Tribune* in the hands of every delegate.[3]

As a result of claim-agent propaganda, the organization was already showing signs of abandoning its comparative silence of the late 1870's. The national encampment of 1881, responding to the attorneys' attack on Commissioner Bentley, established a committee of thirteen members to investigate charges of delay in the settlement of pension claims. At the encampment of 1882 this committee delighted Lemon by recommending the appointment of a standing committee of five men to press the cause of liberalized pensions upon Congress. During 1882 and 1883 the council held conferences with Commissioner Dudley in the hope of expediting the settlement of claims. At the encampment of 1883 the surgeon general reflected one of the *National Tribune*'s arguments in his statement that pensions were not gifts from a grateful country; they were debts. The government's bonds would have been worthless without military victories, and the nation was therefore under no more obligation to pay bondholders than to grant pensions to veterans.[4]

Encouraged by the endorsement of the new commander in chief, Paul Vandervoort, the *National Tribune* continued to urge the G.A.R.'s expansion. Vandervoort hoped to add 50,000 recruits during his administration; Lemon saw no reason why 100,000 could not be gained. At the same time Lemon admitted that his purpose was to make the Grand Army a powerful machine to agitate for pension legislation. He warned congressmen

[3] *Ibid.*, November 5, 1881, March 4, 11, April 8, 29, May 6, June 3, 7, 29, 1882.

[4] *Journal 15th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 791; *Journal 16th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1882, p. 874; Washington *National Tribune*, December 21, 1882; *Nation* (New York, 1865–), XLV, 125.

that members would vote for candidates "whose votes may aid in securing for comrades full justice." [5]

The new commander was a comparatively young man, an excellent speaker, and the first private to rise to the society's most coveted position. Possessing a splendid physique and considerable energy, he had worked zealously for the society's expansion since 1866, when he had aided its rapid growth in Illinois. When the encampment elected him commander in chief it was recognizing neither military accomplishment nor political prominence but service to the society. Vandervoort was just the man to take Lemon's cue. Enthusiastically he assumed the task of increasing membership, and tirelessly he journeyed throughout the country addressing reunions, campfires, banquets, and encampments. The first commander to visit all departments, he traveled 40,403 miles during his administration. Indeed, so complete was his devotion to Grand Army interests that he had no time for his duties as chief clerk of Railway Mail Service at Omaha, and eventually he was dismissed.[6]

Vandervoort's circulars urged recruiting, recommended public campfires and installation ceremonies as a means of heightening general interest, and encouraged the organization of women's auxiliary clubs. In the *National Tribune* he publicized the small cost of membership: the post charter fee was only ten dollars, the initiation cost was a mere two dollars, and dues averaged but fifty cents a quarter. The commander appointed the *Tribune*'s editor his aide-de-camp, and Lemon thereafter redoubled his efforts. At the close of 1882, Vandervoort remarked that charter applications were pouring in through the *Tribune* from all parts of the country: "The fact is that the *Tribune* appeals to a class that can be reached in no other way than through its columns, and I place the highest value on the aid that it has rendered us. . . ." Lemon, too, found the pooling of interests extremely profitable; he reported that subscriptions, at a dollar a year, were flooding his office at the rate of a thousand per week.[7]

[5] Washington *National Tribune,* July 1, 8, August 5, 19, September 16, 23, October 5, 1882.

[6] *Ibid.,* July 1, 26, August 5, December 21, 1882, July 26, September 13, October 4, 18, 25, December 13, 1883.

[7] Circular, Omaha, Neb., April 18, 1882, *ibid.,* May 3, 1882; Circular, Omaha,

The recruiting efforts were successful not only in the East but also in the West and the South, where the organization had been struggling to survive. Drawn by the special concessions in the homestead laws as well as by unemployment problems, soldiers had drifted in large numbers to the West and the Northwest; the census placed the veteran population of Kansas at approximately 100,000. By the early 1880's these servicemen were sufficiently settled to welcome organization. The Vandervoort-Lemon team was, therefore, highly successful in the West, especially in Kansas and Iowa.[8]

The Grand Army line crept southward despite the prejudice of former Confederates. Lemon believed that the society's prospects in this section were good: "It is not to be expected that the Order will make much progress in Alabama and Mississippi, but the State of Texas . . . promises to prove a very fertile field of labor. Northern immigration is pouring into it at a very rapid rate. . . . Florida is now undergoing a genuine industrial and agricultural revolution, and among the northern settlers that are crowding in there are unquestionably, many ex-soldiers." [9]

Lemon proclaimed that the anniversary of Lee's surrender would be a general recruiting day for the organization as a whole; he begged every member to bring in at least one initiate. Early in 1883 the editor boasted that his paper had been directly responsible for many of the new posts. Success only spurred him to greater efforts; he announced that as long as a single veteran remained outside the Grand Army, there would be "work for the *Tribune* to do." At the 1883 encampment Vandervoort, proud of the membership increase of 55,766, which brought the roll to 145,932, expressed his "heartfelt thanks" to Lemon for his "earnest, unselfish services." He credited the *Tribune* with 170 of the new posts.[10]

Rapid growth continued throughout the administration of Commander in Chief Robert Beath, another zealot for expansion.

Neb., December 16, 1882, *ibid.*, December 21, 1882; "General Orders No. 7," Omaha, December 21, 1882, *ibid.*, January 4, 1883; *ibid.*, December 14, 21, 1882.

[8] *Ibid.*, February 22, 1883, January 17, 1884.

[9] *Ibid.*, March 1, April 12, 1883, March 6, 1884.

[10] *Ibid.*, January 10, February 8, March 29, July 26, 1883; *Journal 17th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 1883, pp. 32, 33.

Under his leadership, department officers led membership drives, while Editor Lemon became ever more insistent that veterans must rally to the Grand Army in order to impress Congress. "If you would win, comrades," he advised, "amalgamate, organize and move on the enemy in solid columns." Former soldiers responded so enthusiastically to his pension propaganda that by the middle of 1884 the society reported 36 permanent departments and a membership roll of 233,595.[11]

Various factors facilitated Lemon's campaign. With the return of prosperity, department officers ceased complaining about "hard times" as a stumbling block to expansion. Moreover, many veterans were enjoying greater leisure as they became established in their chosen professions. Undoubtedly recruiting work was smoothed by the developing enthusiasm for secret organizations on the part of the American people. City dwellers' original attitude of suspicion and hostility was gradually changing as they found in them a substitute for the warm neighborliness of rural life and a needed fillip to self-esteem in the increasing anonymity of urban centers. During the 1880's, 136 new secret societies sprang up; by 1896 their enrollment, excluding that of labor organizations, college fraternities, and military societies, reached approximately 5,400,000. Influenced to some extent by this widespread eagerness for fraternization, the veteran felt a special pull toward fellowship. Although his need for group solidarity had long since disappeared as he became adjusted to civilian life, a feeling of sentimental attachment to the comrades of earlier years was taking its place. While it is doubtful that these factors alone would have produced the great increase in Grand Army membership, it must be admitted that the society's leaders and the *National Tribune* launched their combined membership and pension drive at a time when veterans were disposed to respond favorably.[12]

[11] Washington *National Tribune*, December 27, 1883; Boston *Bivouac*, September, 1883, p. 277; *Journal 18th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 1884, p. 43; *Proceedings Ohio Encampments G.A.R.*, 1882, pp. 20, 28 ff.; Columbus *Veteran*, November, 1881; Frank H. Heck, *The Civil War Veteran in Minnesota Life and Politics* (Oxford, Ohio, 1941), 20–21; Elmer Edward Noyes, "A History of the Grand Army of the Republic in Ohio from 1866 to 1900" (MS. doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, 1945), 16, 83; *Proceedings Ohio Encampments G.A.R., 18th Encampment*, 32; *20th Encampment*, 40.

[12] Arthur Meier Schlesinger, *The Rise of the City, 1878–1898* in Arthur M.

By 1884 the Grand Army had become as active in agitating the pension question as even Lemon could wish. Occasional objections were voiced to the society's metamorphosis into a pressure group, but these protests were drowned in the rising clamor for pensions. In 1883 Vandervoort had assured members that they deserved further legislation, and the encampment of that year authorized the commander to appoint a committee annually to urge measures upon Congress. This committee formulated pension bills and lobbied for them. The *National Tribune* urged G.A.R. members to support the committee's recommendations, while the commander in chief advised posts to inform congressmen of their concurrence. Already some were objecting that the lobbying council's program was too conservative. It had refused to endorse demands for service pensions, for the difference between soldiers' currency payments and the value of gold, or for occupation-free land warrants. The members who expected the committee to press these extreme measures constituted a small but vociferous minority.[13]

As the Grand Army grew by leaps and bounds, prominent soldier-politicians reawakened to the possibility of reaping political benefits from membership. Logan, who had allowed his membership to lapse, rejoined the Illinois Department as a recruit. He was yearning for the presidential nomination and capitalizing on his popularity among veterans to expand his boom. General Lucius Fairchild, returning from his European mission in 1882 with plans for renewed political activity, discovered that Wisconsin politicians were loath to advance his ambitions. As a means of getting back into the political current he played a prominent role in soldier activities and resumed participation in the G.A.R. and

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Schlesinger and Dixon Ryan Fox (eds.), *A History of American Life* (New York, 1933), 12 vols., X, 288–90; B. H. Meyer, "Fraternal Beneficiary Societies in the United States," in *American Journal of Sociology* (Chicago, 1895——), VI (1900–1901), 655, 656; W. S. Harwood, "Secret Societies in America," in *North American Review*, CLXIV (May, 1897), 617; Heck, *Civil War Veteran in Minnesota Life and Politics*, 24; Wallace Evan Davies, "A History of American Veterans' and Hereditary Societies 1783–1900" (MS. doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, 1944), 2 vols., I, 6 (used by permission of the author).

[13] *Proceedings Encampments New Jersey G.A.R.*, 1881, p. 19; *Journal 17th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 151; Washington *National Tribune*, February 8, 1883, March 13, 20, 27, April 17, July 24, 1884; "General Orders No. 12," May 6, 1884, *ibid.*, May 8, 1884; *Journal 18th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 105; *Journal 10th Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, 1880, p. 23.

other veterans' societies. In 1881, former President Hayes added the prestige of his name to Grand Army rolls, undoubtedly without ambitious motives. The society's reputation rose another notch when it initiated General Sherman, who also was thinking principally of comradeship in joining. The same could not be said, however, for those friends who persistently hoped to make him President. General Grant had joined in 1877. This fact undoubtedly increased the society's distinction after the general's return from Europe, although he never took such a warm interest in Grand Army activities as did Hayes and Sherman.[14]

The enthusiastic encouragement of Lemon and Vandervoort was responsible for the rapid development of three organizations auxiliary to the Grand Army: the Woman's Relief Corps, the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, and the Sons of Veterans. As early as 1869, wives and mothers were forming clubs in order to aid Grand Army posts in social and charitable activities. In some cases, as in Massachusetts and Ohio, they formed state organizations. From 1870 on, the Grand Army discussed the creation of "side degrees" for these women. In 1875, however, the national encampment defeated a resolution to that effect on the ground that members already had their wives' aid "without any of the complications that might arise from 'side degrees.'" Five years later the national chaplain in chief urged the encampment to authorize the formation of a national woman's organiza-

[14] *Journal 16th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 890; Washington *National Tribune*, January 31, 1884; Fairchild's sister, Sarah, to Mrs. Fairchild, March 3, 1882, Fairchild MSS.; Fairchild to his wife, March 15, 1882, *ibid.;* newspaper clipping, March 3, 1882, *ibid.;* undated clipping, Manitowoc (Wis.) *Tribune*, in November, 1882, papers, *ibid.;* Watrous to Fairchild, November 9, 1882, *ibid.;* A. B. Nettleton to *id.*, January 24, 1884, *ibid.;* clippings, New York *Tribune*, August 8, 1883, May 7, 1884, *ibid.;* J. H. Stine to Fairchild, October 15, 1884, *ibid.;* Fairchild's sister, Sarah, to *id.*, November 12, 1884, *ibid.;* Hayes, application for membership, May 3, 1881, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, IV, 14; diary, May 6, 1881, *ibid.;* Sherman to Albion P. Pease, January 2, 1884, Sherman MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, March 5, 1884, *ibid.;* William Warner, Commander, Missouri Department G.A.R., "Special Order No. 1," Kansas City, Mo., December 7, 1883, *ibid.;* David Murphy to Sherman, December 8, 1883, *ibid.;* L. M. Dayton to *id.*, January 8, 1884, *ibid.;* Sherman to his brother, August 28, 1874, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 340; letter quoted in Columbus *Veteran*, February, 1883; Sherman to Gen. Slocum, December 9, 1882, in Charles Elihu Slocum, *Life and Services of Major-General Henry Warner Slocum* (Toledo, Ohio, 1913), 337; Sherman to his wife, September 16, 1883, in Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of Sherman*, 391; Ward, *History of George G. Meade Post No. 1, Pennsylvania G.A.R.*, 47.

tion, and a committee was appointed to study the matter.[15]

Determinative action awaited stimulation from Commander in Chief Vandervoort, who in 1882 joined the *National Tribune* in urging the scattered societies to unite. At Vandervoort's invitation, delegates from the clubs met at Denver, Colorado, concurrently with the Grand Army encampment. They formed the Woman's Relief Corps, with membership open to all "loyal" women; and the G.A.R. officially recognized the organization as an auxiliary society. Those who insisted upon a membership restricted to relatives of Union soldiers formed a rival association, the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic. Both societies engaged in charitable work and later supported the Grand Army's campaign for patriotism. The prestige of G.A.R. sanction, as well as easier entrance requirements, aided W.R.C. recruiting; in 1886 it boasted 36,632 members, while the Ladies reported only 3,658. By 1896 the membership of the W.R.C. had expanded to 140,305. This society held annual conventions in conjunction with Grand Army encampments, to which it sent a delegate who reported on progress. All was not smooth co-operation between the W.R.C. and its sponsor; the women seemed to enjoy an occasional bitter dispute with Grand Army officers.[16]

Controversies between the two women's societies were more serious. Repeated efforts on the part of Grand Army leaders to consolidate or at least harmonize them failed completely. In 1896 the commander in chief remarked to his encampment that it was a "humiliating spectacle" to see the members "ruthlessly torn asunder because their wives happen to belong to different woman's organizations." His committee strongly recommended consolidation, but the Ladies hotly refused to relinquish their restricted entrance requirements. The wrangling continued; a Kansas

[15] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 102, 351–52; *Proceedings 14th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 1880, pp. 710, 722.

[16] Washington *National Tribune*, December 21, 1882, July 26, August 2, 1888; *Report of National Organization of Woman's Relief Corps, at Denver, Colorado, and Proceedings Second National Convention, 1884* (Boston, 1903), 37; *Proceedings National Conventions of the Ladies of the G.A.R.*, 1st (1886) and 2d (1888), 20; *Journal 29th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 273; Kate B. Sherwood to Fairchild, April 12, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, April 13, 1887, *ibid.*; A. L. Conger to *id.*, March 26, 1887, *ibid.*; Elizabeth D'Arcy Kinne to *id.*, August 10, 1887, *ibid.*

G.A.R. commander complained that because of the contention some of his posts might die "and leave the women to fight over their graves." [17]

The Sons of Veterans developed to national prominence under the same auspices. In 1878 the first "camp" appeared at Philadelphia, but not until late 1881 was a constitution for national organization adopted. Factional divisions checked the society's progress for a time, but it expanded rapidly under the guidance of Vandervoort and Lemon. In 1886 the association reported 7,863 members; by 1888 it boasted 56,472. Its aims were similar to those of the G.A.R., but membership descended from father to son as in the case of the Order of the Cincinnati and the Loyal Legion.[18]

The same factors that produced the Grand Army's rapid expansion caused also a powerful development of army, corps, regimental, and county veterans' societies. Lemon eagerly encouraged their growth by publicizing them in the *Tribune*. In June, 1883, the paper remarked that soldiers' reunions promised to be more numerous that summer than ever before, and in August it commented: ". . . never since the war has the current of fraternal sympathy pulled so strongly in the veins of our veterans as at the present moment. . . ." During 1883 and 1884 the *Tribune*'s columns were filled with announcements and accounts of reunions.[19]

Another indication of rising veterans' interest in organization was the appearance of new national societies. In March, 1884, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, saw the birth of the Union Veteran Legion, whose organization and principles were almost identical with those of the Grand Army. Membership was limited to those who had volunteered before the middle of 1863 and who had

[17] *Journal 30th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 1896, 62–63; Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 5, 1896; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Kansas* (1882–1941), *Journal 19th Encampment*, 1900, pp. 37–38.

[18] Worcester (Mass.) *Veteran*, October, 1891; *Proceedings 11th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 476, 677, 721; Washington *National Tribune*, July 31, 1884, March 12, 26, June 25, July 2, September 3, 1885, August 19, 1886; *Journal of Proceedings, Annual Encampments Commandery-in-Chief, Sons of Veterans of America* (1885–1930), *Journal 4th Encampment*, 4; *Journal 7th Encampment*, 9; article by William E. W. Ross in Washington *National Tribune*, August 16, 1883; Davies, "A History of American Veterans' . . . Societies," I, 233–37; *ibid.*, II, 499–507.

[19] Washington *National Tribune*, February 4, 1882, June 7, August 16, 1883.

either served two years or received discharge for disability. Two years later M. A. Dillon organized the Union Veterans' Union, also like the G.A.R. in purpose and structure. First among its objects was the preservation of "the principles for which we contended." Six months of continuous service or discharge for disability constituted eligibility. Higher membership qualifications led these two societies to regard themselves as more "aristocratic" than the Grand Army. Although some G.A.R. leaders frowned upon them as tending to divide and weaken the veterans' influence, many members joined the new organizations. But they never competed seriously with the older association. A third society, the Union Veteran Army, was particularly active in Indiana. It devoted its attention mainly to agitation for increased pensions, and denounced the Grand Army pension committee as too conservative. This organization also shouted for land warrants and the extension of the congressional preference resolution to include all former soldiers. Its second annual convention determined to interrogate the presidential candidates of 1884 on these points. As the pension movement gained momentum, numerous societies sprang up to spearhead agitation.[20]

The increasing tendency of servicemen to organize and agitate brought renewed prominence to the issue of veteran preference in government appointments. Veterans had expressed irritation over the failure of politicians to live up to expectations in this matter ever since the days when they denounced Johnson for dismissing former soldiers merely because these appointees supported his opponents. In 1868 the G.A.R. encampment adopted Chipman's resolutions complaining that public officials regarded military service as a "positive disqualification," requesting a guarantee of a "definite and equitable number" of civil offices, and demanding a law protecting former soldier–appointees. The New York *Soldier's Friend* publicized the veterans' view on this question, including some condemnation of the War Department for

[20] Worcester *Veteran*, January, 1893; Carnahan, *Manual of the Civil War*, 61, 62; Nashville *Grand Army Sentinel*, January 20, 1886; Boston *Bivouac*, October, 1886, p. 396; "Circular No. 5," issued by Union Veteran Headquarters, Jersey City, signed by George N. Tibbes, commander in chief, April 14, 1884, Harrison MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, October 11, 1883; see also Chap. IX, *infra*.

discharging eighty-four former soldier–clerks. Secretary Schofield received so many objections to these dismissals that he promised an investigation.[21]

During the 1870's prominent public officeholders received numerous complaints from veterans who believed that the Republican party was not fulfilling its obligations in the matter of soldier appointments. But no organized movement developed to put teeth into the vague promise that Congress made after the close of the war. In 1869 the Grand Army requested that Congress redeem its "pledges to the disabled"; thereafter the organization remained silent on the matter for almost a decade. Little help came from the numerous small-claim attorneys' journals, which could scarcely be expected to lead a movement which would bring their owners no profit. Logan proclaimed to the Senate: ". . . had I the appointing power I would give it to those who *never* failed when their country called." But, in general, congressional champions of soldiers neglected the issue. They concentrated on land bounty and equalization bills, which, affecting a much larger number, brought their advocates greater prominence among the volunteers.[22]

Nevertheless, Congress did grant small concessions. In 1874, its resolutions of 1865 urging private employers and public officials to give the disabled preference were revised as Sections 1754 and 1755, Revised Statutes; and "shall be preferred" was substituted for "should be preferred" in the resolution dealing with civil employment. This scarcely constituted a victory for veterans, since the executive might always appoint a civilian and explain that he was better qualified. A House resolution of 1875 granting disabled veterans preference in all that body's appointments failed to emerge from committee, but the following year Congress made a slight concession to veterans, incidental to the passing of an appropriation bill. On the motion of a Republican Senator, a

[21] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments G.A.R.*, 25; Resolutions of Post 11, Massachusetts Department, Henry R. Sibley, Post Commander, December 31, 1867, Johnson MSS.; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July 18, 29, August 8, 1868, August (monthly issue), 1868, August 14, 1869; protest signed C. B. Young, committee on behalf of discharged employees of New Orleans Customhouse, October 2, 1868, Johnson MSS.; see also Chap. IV, n. 34, *supra*.

[22] New York *Soldier's Friend*, June 19, 1869; William E. Mason to Logan, February 23, 1880, Logan MSS.

Union veteran, it was provided that in dismissing appointees officials should retain qualified former soldiers, as well as their widows and orphans. As in the case of Sections 1754 and 1755, no penalty was provided for evasion; the measure, therefore, proved equally ineffective.[23]

In 1878 the Grand Army, after a period of silence on the matter, complained to President Hayes about the discriminatory policy of an Albany official. At the following encampment, Commander John C. Robinson expressed indignation that Union soldiers were being "removed from positions of trust . . . to make room for men who fought for the dissolution of the Union." Veterans must "stand by and support each other, or their rights will be trampled upon." [24] This complaint, a veiled charge against the Democratic majority in the House, was a popular one with Republicans during the 1880 presidential campaign. Their emphasis of the point, leading to countercharges by Democrats, undoubtedly magnified the issue's importance in the minds of veterans.

Editor Lemon was at first indifferent to a project that carried no attorney's fees; but in 1881 he took up the question and in 1882 began a veritable campaign. The Grand Army's interest, too, mounted. The 1881 encampment asked the President to ensure enforcement of Section 1754, and a committee extracted a promise from him that it would be liberally interpreted. In 1883 Commander Vandervoort was "pained" to inform the encampment that the veteran-preference statutes were being "grossly violated." Soldiers had not requested their passage but were justified in demanding their enforcement. He urged the appointment of a "strong committee," backed by "stirring resolutions," that would take immediate action. The encampment accordingly requested that Section 1754 be given "full and unqualified enforcement in all departments of the civil service." [25]

[23] *Senate Reports*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., Report 780, Sections 1754, 1755; cf. March 3, 1865, 38 Cong., *United States Statutes at Large*, XIII, 571; Paul Joseph Woods, "The G.A.R. and Civil Service" (MS. doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, 1941), 19, 20.

[24] *Proceedings 12th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 555; *Proceedings 13th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 583, 596.

[25] Washington *National Tribune*, October 1, 1881, May 6, July 8, October 19, 1882, March 1, 15, July 19, August 2, 1883; *Journal 15th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 815; *Journal 16th Encampment*, 867; *Journal 17th Encampment*, 12, 112.

New York's John A. Dix Post, proclaiming alarm at the numerous dismissals of veteran-appointees, started a movement of its own. It sent a circular suggesting a convention to posts throughout the state; this brought numerous replies, many of them "couched in very strong language." Fifty-five posts sent delegates to the convention in October, 1882, while eighty-one others named committees to co-operate in the movement. The convention announced that former soldiers were not only being dismissed without cause; they were being ignored in new appointments. It declared: ". . . no political party has a right to proscribe these men" who had "earned the right to serve in peace the Government for which they volunteered to fight in war." The delegates set up a general committee consisting of one representative from each post in the state; they also appointed an executive committee headed by Nicholas W. Day. This council, instructed to stimulate the interest of posts throughout the country, began by distributing ten thousand copies of the assembly's resolutions.[26] The movement gathered strength in New York, but it did not attain national prominence until after Cleveland's election.

As the issue attained prominence among veterans, the soldiers' champions began to agitate it in Congress. Early in 1882 Indiana's Democratic Senator Daniel Voorhees, building a reputation as a "soldier's friend," complained that regulations enforced in the Boston and Cincinnati post offices discriminated against veterans. On his motion, the Senate gave the Committee on Military Affairs the task of discovering whether Section 1754 was being violated, whether further legislation was necessary to ensure its execution, and whether it applied solely to the disabled. The committee found that Washington records would furnish "very meagre information" as to army service of the more than 100,000 civil appointees. In order to avoid a long and expensive investigation, it simply asked each cabinet officer the extent to which his department was observing veteran preference.

The replies must have pleased Chairman Logan as well as the report's author, whom the Indiana press had been criticizing for lagging behind Voorhees as champion of soldiers' interests. Committee member General Benjamin Harrison was happy to report that according to the executive heads, no less than 40 per cent

[26] New York *Times*, October 13, 14, 1882.

of the departments' employees were veterans. The General was even more delighted to contrast this record with that of the Senate, of whose seventy-seven new appointments since the Democrats assumed control, nine had been Union soldiers and fourteen Confederate veterans. Harrison severely informed the Senate that it did not "occupy a favorable ground from which to lecture the other departments of the government." The general then proceeded to dispose of his colleague from Indiana. As he later told a constituent, his report "showed that of the nine Indiana appointments . . . only one was a soldier, and he was on the laborers' roll at $720 a year. Of course Mr. Voorhees was back of these appointments, or ought to have been." [27]

The committee believed that a resolution might "call increased attention to the matter in other departments," but it recommended no new legislation because nothing could be "more specific and mandatory than that now in existence." Generals Logan and Slocum advocated measures extending preference to all former soldiers; but these, like two other similar bills, received scant attention. Petitions from several Grand Army departments were unavailing; the only concession made to servicemen was the stipulation in the Pendleton Act that its provisions should not be construed to deprive veterans of the preference granted them by Section 1754.[28]

Behind all the jockeying to prove that one party was doing more than the other in the matter of veterans' appointments was a real and growing dissatisfaction. Lemon's agitation may have been largely responsible; in any case Senator Harrison's correspondence during this period provides ample evidence of mounting irritation on the part of former soldiers. They gave him many uncomfortable moments over postmasterships, which in those days were highly prized rewards for partisan service. Veterans produced particularly complicated snarls over the Fort Wayne and Greencastle appointments. A Republican veterans' club member wrote, "The Soldiers claim . . . that they have been ignored by

[27] *Senate Reports*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., Report 780, July 3, 1882, pp. 7, 9; Harrison to E. G. Hay, August 22, 1882, Harrison MSS.; speech of Harrison, August 30, 1882, Harrison Scrap Books, II, *ibid.*

[28] *Senate Reports*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., Report 780, July 3, 1882, p. 7; Woods, "G.A.R. and Civil Service," 38, 39.

the appointments . . . here, and if their wishes are disregarded their complaints will be more acrimonious than ever. . . ." Another stated that the veterans of "Allen County ask at your hands that recognition so often promised us. . . . No pitcher was ever fashioned . . . that did not 'go to the well once too often.' So with broken promises. All things have an ending. So our patience." Some veterans traced the record of appointments in their congressional district to show how little recognition they had received. A former colonel wrote, "Give us a *good Soldier* from *Indiana*, is the *War Whoop* in Fort Wayne, or else I fear the boys will not whoop it up so lively at future elections." [29]

Not all the dissatisfaction was spontaneous; some was fanned by friends of the applicants. But veterans would not have responded so quickly to these efforts had they not been resentful already, and Harrison was disturbed. He wrote that he had pondered whether he could nominate a civilian to the Fort Wayne postmastership: "To be perfectly frank with you I do not see well how I am to get along with this . . . question. The issue has been made very prominent and I fear that I would be much criticized, and perhaps substantial injury done to the party in your county if I were to recommend a post-master who had never seen service in the army." Similar difficulties arose over the Greencastle appointment; an adviser wrote that "three fourths of the members of our Post of the G.A.R." would regard the success of one applicant "as a direct blow at the soldiers." An increasingly emphasized point in letters of recommendation for appointment was the statement that the applicant was especially popular with the "old soldiers." [30]

[29] J. W. Watson to Harrison, February 26, 1881, Harrison MSS.; Capt. F. F. Bolbe to *id.*, October 14, 1881, *ibid.;* W. D. Page to *id.*, undated, among 1881 material, *ibid.;* Phil R. Grund to *id.*, November 10, 1881, *ibid.;* Robert Stratton to *id.*, October 13, 1881, *ibid.*

[30] Homer C. Hartman to *id.*, October 28, 1881, *ibid.;* Harrison to Hartman, October 24, 1881, *ibid.; id.* to R. S. Taylor, December 14, 1881, *ibid.;* Page to Harrison, November 10, 1881, *ibid.;* D. Foster to *id.*, November 11, 1881, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, December 3, 1881, *ibid.;* Patterson McNutt to Thomas Hanna, February 16, 1883, *ibid.;* clipping, *Commercial Gazette,* dated Greencastle, Ind., January 14, 1883, enclosed in Patterson McNutt to *id.*, January 20, 1883, *ibid.;* Jesse J. Spain and others to Harrison, June 3, 1881, *ibid.;* Jay Cummings to *id.*, February 14, 1883, *ibid.;* Cummings and others to *id.*, February 16, 1883, *ibid.;* John M. Van Trees to *id.*, March 1, 1881, *ibid.;* Jeptha S. Lytton to *id.*, April 6, 1881, *ibid.*

Veterans regarded the civil-service reformers as highly inimical to their interests; when the Pendleton Act went into force, Harrison had to worry about the reaction of his soldier-constituents. A Grand Army member wrote, "This law is fast becoming obnoxious to the soldiers of the late war. They are fast beginning to realize that it was passed as a preventative or bar against their appointment to a government position, and I have letters from many of the boys who have expressed themselves as being unwilling to Vote for a Man who is in favor of such a law." [31]

Opposition to the Pendleton Act and the Civil Service Commission which it established became general among Grand Army members and was especially bitter in the Department of the Potomac. Officers foresaw that it would hamper their efforts to squeeze former soldiers into government jobs. Early in 1884, Department Commander S. S. Burdett strongly denounced the Commission to his encampment: "The broods of fledglings swarming annually from our poor pretences of colleges, too weak to venture their little boats among other rowers on the professional seas, and spoiled for work by a half education, naturally turn, while yet their memories of rules and formulas remains fresh, to the civil service as their safest refuge. They will have the support of the commission. . . ." [32]

The greatest agitation, however, was over the pension issue. As Lemon continued to accompany his encouragement of veterans' societies with pleas that they demand legislation, the former soldiers became vociferous. Grand Army posts responded to his promptings with official resolutions.While it cannot be stated unequivocally that a direct connection existed between the *Tribune*'s propaganda and the rising demands of G.A.R. posts, it seems clear that some connection did exist. By the close of 1882, when the paper was taken at more than ten thousand post offices, many posts kept it on file. The post resolutions that poured in upon Senator Harrison were couched in much the same terms as were Lemon's bold demands. The attitude of one Indiana post, "we do not ask these as favors from the Government, but demand them as our right," was characteristic of most of these resolutions.

[31] J. B. Shaw to Harrison, February 18, 1884, *ibid.*

[32] *Extracts from Address of Samuel S. Burdett, Washington, D.C., 1883* (pamphlet, Washington, 1883), 13.

An Elizabeth, Indiana, post warned, "We . . . feel that we cannot influence legislation as do great corporations; but unless our prayers are heard, a lobby will be placed at the *ballot Box* whose influence will be felt. We are getting impatient with men who spend most of their . . . time on such questions as *Tariff Whisky* in *Bond and Civil Service Reform* . . . and let the wants of men who gave the best years of their life to the service of their Country, go to the bow wows." Apparently other congressmen were similarly deluged; in September, 1883, the *National Tribune* remarked in discussing one of the pension bills: ". . . there was scarcely a day during the entire session of Congress when from a dozen to fifty or more Grand Army of the Republic Post petitions . . . were not presented in the Senate or House. . . ." It was small wonder that congressmen hastened to raise their voices in favor of pension legislation.[33]

And congressmen did respond with alacrity. Early in 1884 the New York *Tribune* reported that "more than 100 pension and bounty bills and resolutions of a general nature have been offered in Congress since this session began," while a few months later the Chicago *Tribune* remarked, "So great has been the pressure on Congress by means of petitions, claim agents, and hopes of party advantage, that different committees have been trying to obtain the advantage gained from reporting bills." [34]

Senator Harrison's measure, less radical than some, seemed to have good prospects. Expressing the general's theory that "there ought to be a place in the Ambulance for every faithful disabled man," it provided that "the Government should pension all disabled soldiers, who had rendered good service, without proof that the disability originated in the service." This bill received the G.A.R. pension committee's approval and completely overshadowed the bounty-equalization bill urged by Harrison's Democratic Indiana colleague. One of the general's henchmen wrote: ". . . since the introduction of your bill . . . Mr Voorhees will be lost sight of as the Soldiers [*sic*] friend." Another reported:

[33] Resolutions from Van Buren Post No. 105, Indiana Department, Pikes Peak, February 9, 1884, Harrison MSS.; post resolutions, February 9 to April 28, 1884, *ibid.*; Z. T. Funk to Harrison, April 9, 1884, *ibid.*; Washington *National Tribune*, September 6, 1883.

[34] New York *Tribune*, January 14, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, May 4, 1884.

". . . the old Soldiers here are very much pleased with your pension Bill. They say that it will . . . do great good for the Republican Party, at our next election." But the Senate committee was slow in reporting because one of the members was frequently away attending to his duties as chairman of the Republican National Committee.[35]

The general press reaction to the numerous pension bills in congressional hoppers was one of stern disapproval; during 1882, 1883, and 1884 many editorials appeared opposing further legislation. Lemon attacked these papers in his *Tribune*, quoting their arguments for purposes of refutation. At first his bitterest jibes were directed at the New York *Tribune;* later the New York *Sun* became the chief object of his assault. Angry veterans showered Lemon with bitter criticisms of the papers that dared oppose their cause, and some of these appeared in the *Tribune*'s columns. But the press opposition continued. The New York *Herald* condemned "a manifest intention on the part of some congressmen and politicians to go on indefinitely in the work of currying favor with the survivors of the Civil War at the expense of the taxpayers," while the Chicago *Tribune* declared, "It begins to look like wholesale confiscation." The New York *Sun* believed that "the war claim agents now substantially control the finances of this country. . . . They have concocted the schemes, and then drummed up the support for them." [36]

Either because of this determined opposition or because many members, particularly Democrats, wished to present a record for economy in the presidential campaign, all the pension and bounty bills came to nothing. Lemon advised politicians to "woo" the soldier "as gently as any sucking dove," warning that the veterans' votes if cast as a unit could determine any presidential election. He pointed out that "our veterans do not propose to vote blindly

[35] Harrison to Dr. F. H. Huron, December 10, 1885, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to R. A. Conner, May 26, 1884, *ibid.;* D. M. Ransdell to Harrison, February 28, 1884, *ibid.;* Isaac Reed to *id.*, March 4, 1884, *ibid.;* Dr. Orin Aborn to *id.*, February 26, 1884, *ibid.;* J. C. Davis to *id.*, February 27, 1884, *ibid.;* Allen S. Felch to *id.*, February 27, 1884, *ibid.;* Michener to *id.*, February 28, 1884, *ibid.*

[36] Washington *National Tribune*, January 14, December 21, 1882, January 4, 18, 25, February 1, 22, August 30, November 8, 1883, January 4, February 7, 1884; New York *Herald*, quoted in Chicago *Tribune*, January 18, 1884; New York *Sun*, quoted in Washington *National Tribune*, February 7, 1884.

this year," and to make sure of their support congressmen "must consult the latter's wishes." [37]

Veterans' letters echoed this attitude. Harrison was warned, "You must settle the Pension Question this Session. . . . or Thousands of Soldiers will Vote the Democratic ticket Simply for a change." Another correspondent was "very much afraid" that Republicans would lose in 1884 "if the Democrats in the present Congress gain the goodwill of the Old Soldiers. . . . The unanimous sentiment of the Comrades is that they will vote for those who are their friends in Congress, without regard to Party." These threats were of no avail. Harrison was hopeful for his bill, which the Senate approved; but it failed in the House. The only pension law passed was the one increasing claim agents' fees from ten to twenty-five dollars. This measure was almost entirely the result of Lemon's lobbying, which he claimed cost him fifty thousand dollars. Just before the bill passed, Lemon bought out N. W. Fitzgerald's forty thousand pension claims as well as his veterans' newspaper. Fitzgerald learned of the increased fee the following day and considered himself defrauded, he said, of "at least Three quarters of a million dollars." He wrote that the measure "took from soldiers and put into the hands of claim agents, of which Lemon was the chief beneficiary—on pending cases alone, more than five millions of dollars." [38]

When Lemon first adopted the cause of Grand Army expansion, he boasted that his paper was as nonpartisan as the organization. Gradually, however, the *National Tribune*'s attitude came to coincide with that of Republicans. On one of the most important issues, tariff reform, the pension attorney had strong personal reasons for his position. Should Democrats succeed in reducing the tariff, the surplus in the Treasury would be so decreased as to render further liberalization of the pension system impracticable. Early in 1882 Lemon, determined to arouse hostility to the low-tariff cause, advised former soldiers to flood Congress with

[37] Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 97–98; Washington *National Tribune*, September 20, 1883, May 15, 1884.

[38] A. G. Richardson to Harrison, March 5, 1884, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, February 26, 1884, *ibid.;* Isaac Reed to *id.*, February 11, 1884, *ibid.;* Harrison to J. A. Saliday, December 23, 1885, *ibid.;* Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 97–98, 100–102; N. W. Fitzgerald to Cleveland, February 3, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

petitions and resolutions. During 1883 and 1884 he continued this attack. For similar reasons the editor vehemently opposed the reduction of internal-revenue taxes. Again urging soldiers to protest, he called upon the Grand Army in particular to influence Congress against attempts at reduction.[39]

The *National Tribune*, claiming by 1884 a circulation of eighty thousand, was molding the views of veterans on other public questions as well. On foreign policy the paper expressed a strongly jingoistic policy; Lemon wanted a new and powerful navy and urged provisions for a stronger militia. Under the heading "Manifest Destiny" he proclaimed that the expanding production of the country rendered inevitable the extension of its influence.[40]

Lemon joined with Commander in Chief Vandervoort in trying to arouse the Grand Army against the Mormons. Before 1883, efforts to give the society a foothold in Utah had failed; only two posts existed there. When Vandervoort reached Utah in the course of his Grand Army tour, he "perceived the importance" of the organization "as a factor on the side of the government in the contest waging against treason." Heedless of the danger that the society's adoption of the Republican position on this question might lead to charges of partisanship, the commander accepted the *National Tribune*'s aid in urging members to crush Mormonism. He assured the national encampment of 1883 that the G.A.R.'s influence might be needed to preserve the Union against a great conspiracy, and he recommended resolutions requesting Congress to bar Mormons from office. The encampment, endorsing his views, asked that Congress "speedily and effectually remove that blot upon the morals and purity of the Nation." While the *National Tribune* continued urging members to impress congressmen with their hatred for Mormonism, the Grand Army in Utah acquired the reputation for being a Republican institution. But the organization as a whole escaped the charge, despite its champion's increasing Republicanism. Dur-

[39] Washington *National Tribune*, March 4, April 8, 22, May 20, June 10, 23, July 28, November 16, 30, December 7, 21, 28, 1882, January 4, February 15, March 22, April 19, December 6, 1883, January 17, 1884.

[40] *Ibid.*, May 6, July 29, 1882, February 7, August 14, 1884; Columbus *Veteran*, November, 1881; James N. Kyner, *Odes, Hymns and Songs of the G.A.R.* (Omaha, 1880), 121.

ing 1883 Lemon complained only three times about newspaper charges of partisanship against the G.A.R.[41]

Various movements among Republicans to nominate a military presidential candidate indicated the solicitude with which the party regarded the veterans. While the *National Tribune* urged veterans to insist that both parties nominate soldiers, advocates of Generals Hawley, Logan, and Fairchild emphasized the popularity of their respective favorites with the boys. Some of Fairchild's friends hoped that the general would head the ticket, while others believed that Republican interest in the soldiers' vote would bring him second place. A Grand Army post commander who claimed to "know much of the feeling in the rank-and-file of the old soldiers" predicted "a disastrous campaign" unless the "right" veteran was nominated.[42]

Hopes ran high for Logan, who determinedly capitalized on veterans' enthusiasm to build up a boom. He had been advised to attend the Grand Army's national encampment of 1883; he not only attended, but delivered an address. With an eye to the effect on his G.A.R. comrades, he again vociferously opposed Fitz-John Porter's restoration to the army rolls. In 1882, President Arthur had removed the disability to holding office; this gesture made Logan the more relentless in his fight to block any congressional admission of Porter's innocence. He shouted: ". . . the great body of the American people do not believe in breaking down the barriers between the men who failed in time of need and the men who stood by their posts." The general lectured the southern senators: ". . . do not come here . . . to cast slurs upon the men who did their duty"; otherwise "more years than you think will pass over your heads before you will have the confidence of the American people." A friend pushed resolutions of approval through the Illinois G.A.R. encampment and boasted that "no

[41] Washington *National Tribune*, November 1, 1883; *Journal 17th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 5, 112; Washington *National Tribune*, June 14, 28, July 26, August 2, 9, 30, November 1, December 6, 1883; "General Orders No. 1," Headquarters Department of Utah, G.A.R., October 9, 1883, *ibid.*, November 1, 1883.

[42] Washington *National Tribune*, December 6, 1883, January 31, February 28, March 20, April 10, 1884; George F. Rowell to Fairchild, May 25, 1884, Fairchild MSS.; Alfred E. Lee to *id.*, February 19, 1884, *ibid.*; G. Gurty [?] to Keyes, May 7, 1884, Keyes MSS.

big guns dared open up on the other side." When objections were voiced that the resolutions were political, he "blandly disclaimed any such intent and assured the boys I did not know what General Porter's politics were." [43]

Although Logan's use of the G.A.R. was quiet, it did not go unnoticed. The New York *Herald* sarcastically suggested that the general "keep in view" the Grand Army's nonpartisanship regulations. On the other hand, a henchman complained that the movement among members should have been started earlier because the society could not "be used directly for political purposes. If the right kind of a circular had been prepared and a copy of it placed in the hands of every member in Ohio early last winter, Ohio would have sent to the Convention a solid Logan delegation. The same could have been done elsewhere." Logan did use the direct approach outside the organization; during the spring of 1884, for example, his Ohio supporters held four veterans' conventions to cheer for him. According to the general's opponents, he planned to make political use of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee at its Chicago convention. General Grant's announcement that he favored Logan was another bid for the soldiers' support.[44]

Despite General Sherman's insistent refusal to accept nomination, a strong movement developed in his favor. He ranked second only to Grant among the Civil War heroes, and his popularity among veterans led some to believe that he could draw a solid soldier vote. One Republican wrote that he was "booming" the general because "the boys would go wild over his nomination. We must have enthusiasm to insure success." Many hoped that his recent initiation into the Grand Army would heighten his pros-

[43] J. R. Chaffee to Logan, June 3, 1883, Logan MSS.; A. T. Wood to *id.*, February 16, 1883, *ibid.;* H. W. Lawton to *id.*, January 18, 1884, *ibid.;* H. H. Thomas to Logan, February 2, 1883, *ibid.; Journal 17th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 16, 201; *Speech of John A. Logan on Fitz-John Porter in the Senate of the United States, Thursday, March 13, 1884* (Washington, 1884), 33; New York *Tribune*, December 30, 1882.

[44] New York *Herald*, June 8, 1884; Washington *National Tribune*, January 31, June 12, 1884; New York *Tribune*, December 5, 25, 1883; M. D. Leggett to Logan, June 10, 1884, Logan MSS.; Lawton to *id.*, January 18, 1884, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune*, January 30, February 11, March 10, 13, 17, 21, 25, April 17, 18, May 5, 27, 1884; Logan to Schurz, February 28, 1884, in Bancroft (ed.), *Speeches, Correspondence and Political Papers of Schurz*, IV, 194; Schurz to Logan, February 29, 1884, *ibid.*

pects. Early in 1884 there were numerous rumors "in the air . . . whispering his name for the . . . nomination." Even though he himself discouraged his nomination, the movement developed to such proportions that his brother, himself hopeful for the prize, wrote, "Someone should be authorized to make a definite and positive refusal if you have concluded to decline the nomination if tendered." [45]

James G. Blaine, regarding the Sherman brothers as serious rivals to his own prospects, decided that he would prefer defeat by the soldier to conquest by the senator. Assuring the former that his nomination was "not improbable," he urged the general to accept. But W. T. Sherman had already assured his brother that he would crush any efforts to use his name and had insisted to others, 'Inasmuch as John Sherman is and of right may be a candidate I wish not to damage *his* chances. . . ." He assured Blaine, therefore, that nothing could induce him to change his mind. Nevertheless, the movement continued during the convention. James R. Doolittle reported to Sherman the possibility that "in spite of your disinclination to take the place . . . the Convention now here, in their sore distress, not knowing what they can do, will nominate you;—not because the politicians here prefer you;—but they may fear defeat, more than they fear you." The enthusiasts accepted the general's decision only after he repeatedly wrote and wired his refusal to jeopardize his brother's prospects.[46]

Republicans hoped that their convention's pledge would placate

[45] James H. McNeeley to S. F. Horall, March 2, 1884, Harrison MSS.; Maj. Sidney Herbert to Sherman, January 21, 1884, W. T. Sherman MSS.; G. T. Lanigan to *id.*, January 2, 1884, *ibid.;* L. M. Dayton to Sherman, January 8, 1884, *ibid.;* J. H. Kent to *id.*, February 13, 1884, *ibid.;* I. N. Arnold to *id.*, February 20, 1884, *ibid.;* John Sherman to *id.*, March 7, 1884, *ibid.;* J. G. McGreer to *id.*, April 3, 1884, *ibid.;* Blanton Duncan to *id.*, April 29, 1884, *ibid.;* E. J. Sherman to *id.*, May 8, 1884, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune*, January 16, 17, 24, 1884; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, February 24, 1884, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 358.

[46] J. G. Blaine to Sherman, May 26, 1884, W. T. Sherman MSS.; C. W. Moulton to *id.*, July 14, 1884, *ibid.;* W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, June 15, 1884, *ibid.;* *id.* to C. W. Moulton, June 3, 1884, *ibid.;* *id.* to J. B. Henderson, June 2, 1884, *ibid.;* *id.* to *id.*, June 5, 1884, *ibid.;* *id* to J. R. Doolittle, June 5, 1884, *ibid.;* Doolittle to W. T. Sherman, June 3, 1884, *ibid.;* Sherman to Blaine, May 28, 1884, Sherman Letter Books (1866–91), 1884–88, Library of Congress; Chicago *Tribune*, June 5, 1884; New York *Tribune*, June 6, 1884; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, May 17, 1884, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 359.

the veterans. Delegate Benjamin Harrison had written, "I think it is important that we should have some regard to the wishes of the soldiers in our nomination, and in our platform. They are numerous and, as my correspondence shows, are a little restive." The platform not only pledged "suitable pensions" to all the disabled as well as to soldiers' widows and orphans; it also promised liberalization of the arrears law.[47]

Logan was urged upon the convention as a candidate who "would have the fervent support, especially, of the soldiers of the North and the colored men of the South." When the general's boom proved insufficient to carry him to the top of the ticket, he turned his strength to Blaine and in so doing gave point to rumors current for weeks that the weaker of the two would support the other and accept a subordinate place. But as this was the first time since the Civil War that a general had not received the Republican presidential nomination, a gentleman's agreement was not the only reason why the convention settled so quickly upon Logan for the ticket's tail. The New York *World* put it bluntly: he was a "good annex to wag invitation to the soldier vote." Republicans were more delicate. In his nominating speech Senator Preston B. Plumb of Kansas proclaimed that a million soldiers would support the general, while the Chicago *Tribune* asserted, "No man who served in the Union army is more popular than he is with the old soldiers. . . . He stands especially high with the Grand Army of the Republic. . . . His steadfast zeal in behalf of the veterans upon every occasion as well as his manly and consistent attitude in regard to the Fitz-John Porter case, ensure a special effort among the Union soldiers for his election." [48]

Accepting his function, Logan phrased his letter of acceptance to appeal to veterans. The party, he declared, must crusade against polygamy as it had against slavery. There should be no "self-defeating parsimony" in domestic or foreign service; the nation's

[47] Harrison to O. H. Woodworth, May 19, 1884, Harrison MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, June 12, 1884.

[48] New York *Tribune*, June 6, 7, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, May 31, June 7, 1884; Shelby Moore Cullom, *Fifty Years of Public Service* (Chicago, 1911), 185–88; New York *World*, June 7, 1884; Washington *National Tribune*, June 12, 1884; *Proceedings Republican National Convention*, 1884, p. 169; newspaper clipping among February, 1865, papers, Grover Cleveland MSS.

obligations to its defenders "should never be forgotten," and his party's liberal pension system "should not be imperilled by adverse legislation." Blaine recognized the veterans, too, in his statement that he favored the principle of veterans' preference in appointments.[49]

Democrats hoped to win by concentrating on their crusade for reform under the leadership of Grover Cleveland, successful reform governor of New York. Logan's nomination led some Democratic papers to urge the advisability of supporting the governor with a veteran. One journal warned: ". . . it behooves the Democratic convention to name for the vice-presidency a soldier who will command more soldier votes than General Logan." This view brought Generals W. S. Rosecrans and J. C. Black into prominence as vice-presidential candidates. But Hancock's experience had disillusioned Democrats regarding the drawing power of a Democratic soldier, and they assigned Thomas A. Hendricks to second place. Although the platform made no specific promise for veterans' legislation, it appealed to former soldiers by advocating the use of internal-revenue taxes for the care of the disabled and for pension payments.[50]

The National Greenback party, making a more definite bid for veterans' support, pledged "equitable" pensions for the disabled as well as a more liberal administrative system. Its platform denounced the "small army of officeholders, whose only business" was "to prevent on technical grounds deserving soldiers from obtaining justice." Its candidate was the "man of the oblique vision," the ubiquitous General B. F. Butler, who urged in his acceptance letter that proceeds from whiskey and tobacco taxes be devoted to pension payments.[51] This suggestion, like that of the Demo-

[49] Chicago *Tribune*, July 22, 1884; Washington *National Tribune*, July 17, 31, 1884; New York *World*, July 23, 1884; Blaine to the Hon. John B. Henderson and others of the Committee, July 15, 1884, in Walter S. Vail (ed.), *The Words of James G. Blaine on the Issues of the Day Embracing Selections from his Speeches, Letters, and Public Writings* (Boston, 1884), 291.

[50] Clipping in Cleveland MSS., misplaced among February 5, 1885, papers; Slocum, *Life and Services of Slocum*, 337; Washington *National Tribune*, July 17, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, July 11, 12, 1884.

[51] Chicago *Tribune*, May 30, July 5, August 8, 1884; Washington *National Tribune*, June 5, 1884; Donald LeCrone McMurry, "Civil War Pensions, 1885–1897" (MS. doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1921), 67.

cratic platform, was designed to meet the Republican claim that if tariffs were reduced, pensions could not be paid.

In July a writer for *Century* insisted that there was no such thing as a "soldier vote" which held together and could be "thrown bodily on one side or the other"; this was, he said, merely a "fiction" developed by the "Washington claim agents." But the parties apparently believed it safer to assume that there was. The Republican press, aware that General Logan's presence on the ticket was a great advantage, assumed an air of confidence in appealing for veterans' support. An important item in its propaganda was the war record of the Democratic candidates. Both, remarked the Chicago *Tribune*, "were content to practice law and hold office intermittently when the cause of human rights was being vindicated on the battlefield by braver and more patriotic men." Hendricks it termed a "fire-in-the-rear Copperhead who never drew a loyal breath." Ignoring the fact that two of Cleveland's brothers had served with the Union forces throughout the war, Republicans asserted that Cleveland's substitute had been a convict. The candidate himself refuted the charge in a letter stating that he had hired a sailor who had just been paid off. The Democratic press followed this with the reminder that Blaine also had sent a substitute.[52]

Aside from repeated consideration of the question "Was Cleveland an enemy of the Union?" Republican journals waved the bloody shirt much less vigorously than in previous campaigns. Perhaps they were following Blaine's lead in soft-pedaling this issue until after the West Virginia election. But they did not drop it entirely. The Chicago *Tribune*, for example, reprinted Ingersoll's bloody-shirt speech before the 1876 Republican veterans' convention, addressing it to the attention of "the Boys in Blue." [53]

The Republican press placed greater emphasis on its charge that since the war Cleveland had acted consistently against the veterans' interests. His veto while mayor of Buffalo of an ap-

[52] Eugene V. Smalley, "The United States Pension Office," in *Century Magazine*, XXVIII (July, 1894), 427; Chicago *Tribune*, July 12, September 22, 1884; Roland Hugins, *Grover Cleveland, A Study in Political Courage* (Washington, 1922), 12; New York *World*, October 28, 1884.

[53] Muzzey, *James G. Blaine*, 313; Chicago *Tribune*, July 22, 1884.

propriation for the observance of Memorial Day received considerable attention, as did also his refusal to grant small privileges to the New York G.A.R. Moreover, the Republican press charged, he had vetoed both a pension bill and an appropriation for a monument at Gettysburg. The Chicago *Tribune* insisted that Cleveland had opposed everything that "the soldiers asked of him." Was it "mulish obstinacy or party spirit that made him hostile to the boys in blue?" In stressing these points the journals almost ignored the pension and veterans' preference issues.[54]

This time Democrats took the lead in planning an extremely active veterans' campaign organization. A monster gathering which met at Chicago after the regular convention established a "National Veteran Association" to make "war upon corruption . . . work for purity, simplicity and efficiency in all the Departments of the Government, and . . . fight . . . the encroachments of political and moneyed monopolies upon the liberties of the people." The national committee issued a plan of organization for local clubs from headquarters at Chicago, specifying that members must assemble at least once every two weeks during the campaign. For each state it appointed a committee of prominent veterans, among them Generals McClernand, Palmer, Corse, McClellan, Slocum, W. B. Franklin, J. C. Black, Fitz-John Porter, and Franz Sigel.

The national committee, challenging the Republican party's assumption that it contained "all the patriotism, integrity and talent of the country," presented the Democratic party in the role of friend to "soldiers, sailors, and pensioners." The committee insisted in its circulars that the Democrats could claim equal credit with Republicans for the preservation of the Union. Proceeding to the question of veterans' legislation, it asserted that the "untiring efforts" of Democrats were responsible for the "liberal provisions" of the pension and bounty laws. The committee pointed out that a Republican Senate had defeated a bill liberalizing the arrears law and had spurned the bill passed by the Democratic House providing fines and imprisonment for violation of Section 1754. Declaring that the administration's corruption was the "new enemy," the committee copied Republican phraseology in its

[54] Chicago *Tribune*, September 21, 1884; New York *Tribune*, July 20, 1884.

plea, "Let us show that we are both ready and able to defend . . . in a civil contest the cause we preserved in the field." The organization's leaders relied upon these arguments rather than on the rallies and parades of previous years, and the Democratic press echoed their propaganda. Cleveland did his bit to impress the veterans; he delivered a Fourth of July address to a Grand Army banquet in Buffalo.[55]

The loud and colorful Boys in Blue demonstrations were missing from this campaign; and, in fact, the organization seemed quiescent outside New York. That state, however, boasted a closely knit association. Henry A. Barnum, who had deserted the cause of veterans' organizing in 1872, returned as aide to the commander. Serving in the same capacity was James R. O'Beirne, investigator and alarmist of Republican activities among veterans in 1866. The New York *Tribune*, giving the clubs its blessing, proclaimed that once more the boys who saved the Union would "keep it in the line of healthful progress, and . . . exclude from the administration . . . the party which . . . only counsels its old heresies." [56]

Republicans relied upon less blatant methods than campaign organizations to gather in the veterans. The numerous soldier reunions held during the summer provided the best opportunity for disseminating propaganda, and they called upon their tireless vice-presidential candidate to bear the brunt of this task. During the campaign Logan's correspondence overflowed with invitations to reunions. These gatherings were ostensibly nonpartisan, but writers often stated that Logan's presence was needed to stimulate enthusiasm for the Republican cause. The president of a Michigan veterans' society wrote, "Our state is tinctured with Greenbackism and Democracy. . . . We cannot reach the Dem-

[55] Washington *National Tribune*, July 3, 1884; circulars, National Veteran Association, Headquarters, Chicago, Gen. M. R. M. Wallace, president, July 8, September 24, 1884, included with enclosures of letter from John M. Butler to Cleveland, May 4, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; Butler to Vilas, July 21, 1884, Vilas MSS.; articles by Michael Tierney, published in Albany *Argus*, enclosed with Michael Lanahan to Cleveland, December 27, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; New York *World*, August 21, 1884; Albert Ellery Bergh (ed.), *Addresses, State Papers and Letters of Grover Cleveland* (New York, 1909), 45–47.

[56] "General Orders No. 1," Boys in Blue, New York City, Maj. Gen. Joseph B. Carr, Commander, to "Comrades," July 26, 1884, in New York *Tribune*, August 3, 1884.

ocratic and Green Back Heart at a Regular Political campaign meeting but: we can get them *together* at one Re Union Encampment, and while you are supposed to be making a strictly nonpartisan speach [*sic*], you can So touch the Loyal Hearts of those Wafaring [*sic*] Republicans who have wondered [*sic*] from our folds that they will cast our Party Vote Next fall."

A telegraphed invitation from San Francisco urged: ". . . our hopes are builded on your presence and the enemies [*sic*] defeat can only be secured through the enthusiasm engendered by the reception that five thousand old soldiers will extend." [57]

These workers found General Logan both responsive and indefatigable. From June, when Washington, D. C., veterans honored him with fireworks and a procession, to the close of the campaign, he proceeded from one cheering assembly to another. Among the largest of these was the encampment of the Soldiers and Sailors of the Northwest at Chicago, where Logan shared honors with his old friend General Oglesby at a gathering of some four thousand veterans. In September he addressed the Society of the Army of the Cumberland. And everywhere he stopped on his speechmaking tour, he was escorted by shouting veterans' processions that emphasized his position as "soldiers' idol." At Madison, General Fairchild staged a unique demonstration: in Logan's honor he led eighty one-armed soldiers in solemn procession, each waving a torch in his single hand.[58]

Sheridan and others were also called upon to use gentle persuasion at reunions. General Sherman did not overlook the possibilities afforded by the reunion of the Society of the Army of the Tennessee, of which he was president. Requesting his brother to deliver a toast, he remarked: ". . . of course our Banquet is Non-Political Still you can put in Some points to satisfy soldiers that the Republican Party did not use us for their own selfish purpose, and cast us off when done with us, as Many feel and believe." The representative of a nonpartisan Ohio reunion urged the attendance of the President and cabinet in order to heighten Republican prospects: "To such a gathering they could well

[57] Samuel Wells to Logan, July 2, 1884, Logan MSS.; Walter H. Holmes to Logan, telegram, n.d., *ibid.*

[58] Washington *National Tribune*, September 4, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, June 22, August 25, 27, September 2, 3, 16, 18, 21, October 29, 30, November 1, 2, 1884.

come without exposing themselves to the criticisms of attending a political meeting. . . ." Sometimes prominent Democratic soldiers attended reunions as counterbalance to the presence of Logan or other Republican generals.[59]

Republicans did not forget the national soldiers' homes. They were particularly eager to win the solid support of the institution at Dayton, Ohio, the 4,080 residents of which held the balance of political power in their district. General Logan arrived in October to assure them that no "faithful and honest soldier" could support the Democratic ticket. Other methods of influencing these maimed veterans were less acceptable. Rumors of votes won by lavish distribution of whiskey led the House to appoint an investigating committee, and in July this group began its work under the direction of Democratic General Rosecrans. The investigators found particularly unsavory circumstances at Dayton; the polling place was outside the home's jurisdiction, and here the politicians of both parties plied the old soldiers with whiskey to the point of inebriation.[60]

Republican use of the G.A.R. for campaign purposes was extensive but delicate. Many of the society's leaders worked quietly among the members. Democrats complained that party workers were trying to organize the Brooklyn posts into "one powerful club to co-operate with the Republican Committee." In general, however, efforts to influence the members were subtle, although the party's vice-presidential candidate was depended upon for leadership. A Kansas member, urging attendance at a reunion of forty posts, commented: ". . . your Presence Here Although it may Do No Good in Kansas, may Have Some Effect on our Border State of Mo." A similar invitation from New York contained the information: "This country has 15 Posts of the G.A.R. and you should receive all the votes. . . ." From the Republican

[59] W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, June 21, 1884, W. T. Sherman MSS.; E. M. Wood to Chandler, July 14, 1884, W. E. Chandler MSS.; John Black to Vilas, July 22, 1884, Vilas MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, May 4, 29, July 31, August 1, 8, 14, 28, 29, September 5, October 7, November 1, 1884.

[60] Chicago *Tribune*, October 4, 1884; New York *Soldier's Friend*, July, 1869; Hayes to R. C. Schenck, January 13, 1870, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, III, 109; New York *Tribune*, November 14, 18, 1870, January 17, 1871; *Cong. Globe*, 41 Cong., 3 Sess., January 16–23, 1871, pp. 513–15, 568, 677; Washington *National Tribune*, May 1, July 24, August 21, 1884.

national committee came the suggestion, "Can't you get the Rep. Grand Army of Ohio to invite you to some gathering in this October state? If you can get the soldiers, and I can get the army of . . . peace men we can carry the State without any further aid. . . ." [61]

Logan did attend a Grand Army demonstration at Toledo in September, and he enjoyed enthusiastic receptions from New York posts. In fact, the general participated in as many G.A.R. gatherings as he could. On "Grand Army Day" of a monster reunion in Michigan, he shared honors with General Russell Alger, candidate for governor. When he left Washington to attend the national Grand Army encampment, representatives of Burnside Post escorted him to the train; at Minneapolis the delegates cheered him lustily. Lemon, who also attended the encampment, reported in his *National Tribune*, "General Logan rode with head uncovered, and returned the salutations of comrades thronging the sidewalks. . . . The General never looked better, and a smile of pleasure and fraternal greeting was by no means unbecoming to his sometimes sombre face." Some members wanted to hang out a Logan banner at the governor's home, where Logan was staying; they deferred to Logan's firmly expressed wish that politics be "kept out of the Grand Army." However, the general played a prominent role in the parade and addressed one of the evening gatherings. Logan's speeches on these occasions were carefully nonpartisan. He made eloquent pleas for "true comradeship" and urged consecration to the society's "true principles," of which "charity was its crowning excellence." For the most part, Blaine left the work with soldiers to his running mate, but he did attend a state Grand Army reunion at Old Orchard, Maine, where the boys cheered him with cries of "our next president!" [62]

Democrats were not fooled by these indirect appeals. "The G.A.R. is 'working the Soldier racket for all it is worth,' " com-

[61] Resolutions of Democratic veterans' campaign association of King's County, New York, enclosed in letter of William H. Riley to Cleveland, November 19, 1884, Cleveland MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, November 27, 1884; R. P. McGregor to Logan, June 16, 1884, Logan MSS.; W. J. Pentelow to *id.*, July 14, 1884, *ibid.*; R. M. McMurdy to *id.*, September 2, 1884, *ibid.*

[62] Washington *National Tribune*, July 24, 31, September 18, 1884; New York *Tribune*, July 20, 23, August 15, 16, 28, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, July 23, August 8, 1884; W. T. Sherman to his brother, July 26, 1884, W. T. Sherman MSS.

plained one veteran to McClellan. Others worried over the success of their opponents' efforts to weld New York City Grand Army members into the aforementioned "club to co-operate with the Republican Committee." Some journals were caustic in their criticism. The Albany *Argus*, declaring the members "loud, brawling men," advised them to disband. The St. Louis *Republican* opined that the society had been partisan from its beginning and was now "fast growing gray, we might say bald, in the service of the Radical party." It pronounced G.A.R. declarations "so much political claptrap," its services and celebrations "so much Radical engineering to catch votes for Radical committees." Surprisingly, the New York *World* did not join in these attacks. When the New York *Sun* prophesied that most members would support the Republican ticket, the *World* emphatically disagreed, proclaiming that they would rather rebuke that party which had been "so careless of the honor of the country as to put forward so degraded a demagogue for President." [63]

The accusations evidently disturbed Grand Army leaders. The *National Tribune* denied them indignantly, while Commander in Chief Beath devoted some time to the matter in his national encampment address. Stating his belief that the nonpartisanship regulation had not been violated, he remarked that the society could not be "responsible for every indiscreet utterance in conventions or on the stump. . . . We cannot muzzle every speaker or suppress the reporter." Moreover, members did not surrender their rights as citizens; they might still attend political meetings as individuals. He reminded his audience, however, that it was "bad taste" to wear the Grand Army badge at such gatherings. In some cases, department commanders investigated flagrant violations of the rule. A New York officer warned that posts would be punished for political activities; a Vermont post managed to keep its charter after explaining that its uniformed participation in a campaign parade was "without thought of partisanship"; a Maine post lost it for acting as escort at a party demonstration. The New York *Tribune* hoped to silence the accusers with a counterattack.

[63] Horatio C. King to McClellan, October 18, 1884, McClellan MSS.; Riley to Cleveland, January 3, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; Albany *Argus* and St. Louis *Republican*, quoted in Chicago *Tribune*, August 28, September 22, 1884; New York *World*, August 21, 1884.

"When did this impudent secessionist journal . . . this organ of Copperheads in war and of organized assassination ever since," it sneered of the New York *Herald*, "acquire any right to speak . . . for loyal soldiers?" [64]

A more direct Republican attempt to reach the soldiers was through the Pension Bureau, which Commissioner W. W. Dudley had carefully developed into a powerful political machine. Soon after his appointment Dudley had requested and received from Congress a more-than-doubled clerical force. He prepared a statement showing the enlistments in all states and territories, and with the aid of Grand Army posts he compiled a directory containing names and addresses of every surviving Union soldier.[65] This material was supposedly designed to help soldiers establish their claims; it was also extremely valuable for the presidential campaign. Dudley had failed to win the Republican gubernatorial nomination in Indiana; but it was understood that should Blaine win, the commissioner would step up to become secretary of the interior. With this personal interest in Republican success, Dudley offered pensions as a bribe for votes.

More than two-fifths of the pensioners and more than half of the claimants lived in the politically doubtful states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, where the elections were likely to be determined by the pensioners' votes. Dudley concentrated his attention upon Ohio and Indiana and, according to charges, ordered that claims from those states be given preference. The commissioner turned in his resignation to take effect November 10 and—snapping "his fingers at the civil service law," as the New York *World* put it—drew his regular salary during two months of campaigning.[66]

Dudley went first to Ohio, where political sentiment seemed equally divided, to direct the work of winning pensioners to the Republican standard. The 63 special examiners were increased

[64] Washington *National Tribune*, June 26, July 24, September 25, October 2, 1884; *Journal 18th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 34; Beath to Lemon, June 17, 1884, in Washington *National Tribune*, June 26, 1884; *Proceedings 18th Encampment Vermont G.A.R.*, 41–42; New York *Tribune*, October 4, 1884.

[65] Beath's address to national encampment, in Washington *National Tribune*, July 24, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, April 4, 1884; applications from veterans, April–August, 1882, Harrison MSS.

[66] Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 109; New York *World*, October 15, 1884.

to 101; these men assured claimants that under a Democratic administration they would lose what they already had, but that if they and their friends carried the Republicans to victory, their claims "would be advanced on the list and soon adjusted." Moreover, as a member of the campaign committee Dudley sent out hundreds of workers, who concentrated their efforts upon Democratic pension applicants. These men used the same arguments as did the regular pension agents. Republicans carried the state by fifteen thousand; and Carl Schurz, who had been stumping Ohio, immediately charged that this result was largely attributable to the agents' activity. Asked if their work had come under his own observation, he cited several instances. The official list of claimants, he believed, had been the greatest factor in the examiners' success because it gave them "every facility" for personal approach. The Democratic state committee proclaimed that Dudley was chiefly responsible for the Republican victory, while Congressman William Warner ascribed his defeat solely to the work of the commissioner's men among Democratic veterans.[67]

Dudley transferred his operations to Indiana, where he was particularly energetic in his efforts to prevent the re-election of Congressman William Holman and of C. C. Matson, Democratic chairman of the House Committee on Invalid Pensions. The commissioner ordered that Matson's Republican opponent be given the same preference in pension cases as that extended to congressmen. Moreover, the Pension Bureau weakened Holman's influence by delaying claims which he recommended. Dudley expressed to the Honorable George W. Steele the hope that the campaign would be "blended to be of mutual advantage. I will do everything I can to give prompt attention to any calls you may make. I will have letters written with slips sent by you." This time the commissioner's efforts were unavailing; Cleveland won a majority of 6,512 in Indiana. Both Matson and Holman were re-elected, though by greatly reduced majorities. Dudley and his cohorts were not the only ones working this device: a Grand Army man

[67] Article, "How Ohio was Carried," and editorial, in New York *Times*, October 20, 1884; John H. Williams to Cleveland, January 1, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., February 25, 1886, p. 1800; Tanner to Grosvenor, September 8, 1884, *ibid.*, March 4, 1886, p. 2046; Louis Wagner to *id.*, September 8, 1884, *ibid.*; Thomas M. Shulz to Harrison, March 8, 1886, Harrison MSS.

wrote that as a result of his efforts in Wisconsin, his comrades understood "that if they vote the democratic ticket they vote against pensions." [68]

Editor Lemon continued his claim to nonpartisanship; but he made his journal, which now boasted 113,000 regular subscribers, an undisguised Republican organ. He explained that he advocated the election of Republican nominees because their platform favored meeting the government's pledges to the veterans. During July he insisted that Cleveland and Hendricks were hostile to former soldiers' interests, and he asserted that the "real intent" of Democratic agitation for tariff reform was "to so cut down the revenues of the government that there will be no surplus out of which to meet the payments required by the new pension legislation, and *vice versa*, to pass no new pension laws, so as to have an excuse for abolishing the internal revenues entirely." Blaine, on the other hand, received unmeasured praise for having revived war issues in Congress. It was his voice "reciting anew in the face of the rehabilitated South the story of Andersonville that recalled to the Nation the horrible reality of the war and its own still gaping wounds." [69]

Lemon did his share to increase sectional animosity by declaring that veterans had received no recent concessions because the "Confederacy" was "in the saddle" in Congress. No matter how the former Confederates might disagree on other questions, when it came to granting the Union soldier what "his wrecked health and maimed body justly entitled him to, they were found shoulder to shoulder as they were twenty years ago." Moreover, Lemon undertook to gain a large sale for Logan's campaign biography.[70]

But in August, Lemon suddenly ceased his advocacy of Re-

[68] Dudley to George W. Steele, July 30, 1884, *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., March 3, 1886, pp. 2016–21, 2048–56, 2058, 2067; Oliver, *Civil War Pensions*, 105–17; Allan Nevins, *Grover Cleveland, A Study in Courage* (New York, 1932), 172; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 197; Howe, *Chester A. Arthur*, 216; J. A. Dougherty to Logan, March 4, 1886, Harrison MSS.; H. W. Lee to Harrison, January 7, 1886, *ibid.;* Harry Fisk to *id.*, February 27, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, March 3, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, March 4, 1886, *ibid.;* O. D. Buffington to *id.*, March 2, 1886, *ibid.;* Abram Hill to *id.*, March 4, 1886, *ibid.;* William T. Sullivan to Hon. Chauncey I. Filley, March 6, 1886, *ibid.;* Thomas Graham to Harrison, May 12, 1886, *ibid.;* George F. Rowell to Fairchild, September 16, 1884, Fairchild MSS.

[69] Washington *National Tribune*, July 10, 17, 1884.

[70] *Ibid.*, July 17, September 11, 1884; George F. Dawson to Mrs. Logan, September 11, 1884, Logan MSS.

publicans. Perhaps he foresaw their defeat and hesitated to antagonize Democrats against his pension cause; perhaps he disagreed with Republican leaders over legislative commitments. At any rate, the editor confined his agitation for the remainder of the campaign to demands for a liberalized pension system. He even announced his support for an Illinois Democratic nominee who had always voted "for justice to soldiers." [71]

Important though the soldiers' vote seemed to some campaign workers, it was but one of several elements in the struggle. Other factors were the Tammany revolt, the prohibitionist vote, the business depression, lingering distrust for the South, the Stalwarts' desertion of Blaine and the Independents' hatred for him, Blaine's "Mulligan" letters, Nast's cartoons, the Republican "plutocrats' " dinner at Delmonico's, and the famous "Rum, Romanism and Rebellion" slip.[72] Only one of these—distrust for the South—operated in Blaine's favor, since most of the Tammany men finally gave Cleveland grudging support. Strained relations between Blaine and Logan did not aid the canvass.

Logan's machine-politics record, moreover, was scarcely an inducement to Independents, already soured by Blaine's candidacy. On the other hand, Democrats could not have presented a stronger bid to these reformers than the record of their straightforward candidate. The Republicans' frantic last-minute waving of the bloody shirt proved as futile as their slurs upon Cleveland's private life; the aggressive Democratic crusade for reform kept them constantly on the defensive. Undoubtedly the Independents' desertion of Blaine was a decisive factor in the result. The presence on the ticket of a bait for the veterans' vote was insufficient to compensate for the loss of the reformers.[73]

Realization of failing strength in other fields heightened Republican determination to hold the soldiers' vote. Their quiet use of ostensibly nonpartisan G.A.R. and other veterans' reunions

[71] Washington *National Tribune*, August 14, 1884.

[72] Nevins, *Cleveland*, 170; Thomas, *Return of the Democratic Party to Power*, 215; Muzzey, *James G. Blaine*, 306–307; Howe, *Chester A. Arthur*, 266; Fuess, *Schurz*, 298–99; New York *Tribune*, November 14, 1884; New York *World*, October 30, 1884.

[73] Muzzey, *James G. Blaine*, 307; Thomas, *Return of the Democratic Party to Power*, 168, 174, 193, 228–31; New York *World*, October 24, November 6, 1884; Fuess, *Schurz*, 298–99.

must have produced results, as did also Dudley's prostitution of the Pension Bureau to political ends. Yet it is by no means certain that the soldiers' vote actually detracted from the numerical strength of Cleveland's victory. The unusually active Democratic veterans' campaign organization disseminated reform propaganda while refuting Republican charges that the party was treasonable as well as hostile to servicemen's interests. Moreover, the heightened interest of Democratic congressmen in veterans' measures was having its effect. "I think we as soldiers, have as much to thank Democrats for as Republicans," one veteran wrote; ". . . all the bills now pending in Congress have been introduced by Democrats." The platform promise that the income from internal-revenue taxes would be used as a fund to pay pensions was another point in the party's favor. The Chicago *Tribune*, assigning this factor undoubtedly exaggerated importance, asserted that the pledge caught enough soldiers' votes "to win that close election. It is morally certain that without such a plank . . . Mr. Cleveland would never have been elected. It strengthened him in every northern state and must have added more to his vote in New York than the beggarly 1,045 plurality. . . ." [74]

On the other hand, many veterans were by no means satisfied with the Republican administration; Lemon's continual pension agitation was leading them to expect far more than the arrears act granted. Harrison's correspondence was filled with evidence of their growing irritation. One soldier warned that if the party neglected bounty equalization, it would "Reap the Whirlwind." Another, reporting that complaints were "loud and deep against the Violation of Section 1754 on the part of the Republicans," reminded Harrison that "Democrats in Congress are doing everything in their power *this* year to gain the soldier Vote." Still another asserted that if the Republicans entered the campaign without having a pension bill to their credit, they would "loose [*sic*] the Soldiers Vote. . . . Mind the Soldiers are Reading and talking and have Simpathising [*sic*] Friends." They would support the Democrats "believeing [*sic*] they can do no worse." Although

[74] Nevins, *Cleveland*, 172; "Old Soldier" to editor, Washington *World*, clipping enclosed in letter of Reed to Harrison, February 11, 1884, Harrison MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, December 29, 1887.

Lemon urged support of the Republicans during July, his virulent attack throughout the campaign upon Dudley's pension administration could scarcely have disposed his readers to praise Republican policy. Harrison remarked with surprise that although Dudley's "inclination" was to give the claimant the benefit of the doubt, "yet I have had a good many complaints from all parts of the state." The secretary of the "Disabled Soldiers of Ohio" organization believed that "the whole practice of the Pension Office is a disgrace to the nation." [75]

Whether these irritations against the Republicans actually prompted many veterans to vote for Cleveland cannot be ascertained. There are definite indications, however, that some of them did. Harrison, a keen observer of the political scene, recorded his disappointment that "the soldiers of the country did not respond more fully to what we had done for them." Again, he expressed amazement "that so many soldiers were betrayed into the belief that the Republican Party was not doing what it ought for the soldiers." A Republican resident of the soldiers' home at Milwaukee reported that Cleveland received a majority of "only" sixty-one among some twenty-five hundred inmates. Logan must have been crushed to learn that the Democratic nominee could match his appeal to the maimed veteran. A Connecticut Democrat wrote to Cleveland, "I Visited many G.A.R. Posts, and in private interviews I learned that thousands of Republicans would vote for you, for they were disgusted with the way they had been treated by the pension office. In your own state I learned after a very close and careful canvass had been made, it was estimated that ten thousand old republican soldiers would vote for you. I know it was the soldier vote that carried this State and I am sure it carried your own State, notwithstanding it is said Mugwumps done it." A later Republican estimate credited Democrats with winning 25 per cent of the Union Veterans' vote. Finally, reports during the next presidential campaign of veterans' conversion to

[75] A. G. Robb to Harrison, March 14, 1884, Harrison MSS.; J. B. Shaw to *id.*, February 18, 1884, *ibid.;* A. G. Richardson to *id.*, February 26, 1884, *ibid.;* Reed to *id.*, February 11, 1884, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune*, May 8, 22, September 25, October 2, 30, November 13, 1884; Harrison to George W. Gordon, June 10, 1884, Harrison MSS.; A. G. Richardson to Harrison, February 26, March 5, 1884, *ibid.;* Felch to *id.*, February 27, 1884, *ibid.*

Republicanism indicate that many must have voted the Democratic ticket in 1884.[76]

In the bleak aftermath of defeat, Republicans faced the cold fact that bloody-shirt waving and vague promises were insufficient to hold the soldier vote as a unit for their party; too many of the boys had been led to expect substantial returns for their support. This realization must have been particularly bitter to the war's "greatest volunteer officer." So ambitious to be president and so tireless in building up his position among the soldiers, Logan had failed even to attain the vice-presidency. His friends' assurances that had he been in Blaine's place "Blackjack" might have carried his party to victory were perhaps small consolation. But their whispers that 1888 might bring him the opportunity to head the ticket were more reassuring. The general quickly recovered his joviality; even the New York *World* was moved to remark that although ignorant of the mysteries of grammar the general knew "how to make a defeat agree with the candidate defeated." With undiminished determination, Logan struggled through a difficult senatorial campaign and, emerging victorious, continued his bloody-shirt waving and his advocacy of veterans' legislation. His eyes were on the future; perhaps in 1888—who could tell—a Republican soldier-candidate would vanquish the party that dared to challenge Republican claims to the soldiers' loyalty.[77]

[76] Harrison to J. A. Saliday, December 23, 1885, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to G. W. Carey, *ibid.;* Capt. Clinton McCord to Harrison, July 26, 1888, *ibid.;* James L. Ferris to Cleveland, January 4, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; Minneapolis *Tribune*, August 10, 1888.

[77] Josiah Bushness Grinnell, *Men and Events of Forty Years, Autobiographical Reminiscences of an Active Career from 1850 to 1890* (Boston, 1892), 198; Cullom, *Fifty Years of Public Service*, 185, 188; New York *World*, November 29, 1884; Chicago *Tribune*, December 15, 20, 30, 1884; Washington *National Tribune*, January 15, 22, 1885; John Alexander Logan, *The Great Conspiracy: Its Origin and History* (New York, 1886).

Chapter Nine

Cleveland Breaks the Hornets' Nest

Under stimulus of its lobbying activities, Editor Lemon's incessant encouragement, and the undoubted attraction of mounting success, the Grand Army continued its rapid expansion. In 1885 the adjutant general reported that 5,026 posts boasted 269,684 members; by 1887 the society claimed 320,946 members. As veterans hastened to join their friends in "F. C. and L.," the G.A.R. gave indications of becoming a powerful political force. Yet the organization was by no means able to present a united front.[1]

To a greater extent than in its early years, the Grand Army was composed of divergent elements. Among the rank and file, many—their appetite for pensions whetted by claim agents' agitation—had joined in order to strengthen an agency for wresting grants from the Treasury. The society's social and charitable, as well as its lobbying, activities led Democratic initiates to discount its leaders' political designs.[2]

During the early 1880's, three factions struggled for control of the organization's policy. Republicans who wished to make the society openly a political machine opposed the policy of those who advocated a more subtle political use; Democrats constituted a third group. Of these, the conservative element that had guided the Grand Army through the 1870's was still dominant. Many of the national officers of that decade—Devens, Burnside, Hartranft, and Beath—were active Republican politicians; but so circumspect was their leadership that the society's earlier partisanship was almost forgotten. These men continued to emphasize

[1] *Journal 19th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1885, p. 51; *Journal 21st Encampment*, 1887, p. 53.

[2] Albert Fest to Lamont, April 5, 1886, Cleveland MSS.

the Grand Army's fraternal aspect while quietly directing the members to Republican paths. Some of them frowned upon veteran-preference agitation and extreme pension demands as inevitably tending to embroil the organization in politics.

Many of the more aggressive group had abandoned the society after the election of 1868; but they were once more powerful, and during Cleveland's administration they would become increasingly so. Eager to encourage hostility to the President, these leaders seized every opportunity to charge him with hostility to veterans. Their aggressive methods served to antagonize rather than convert the Democratic members.

The third group consisted of Democrats like Rosecrans, Slocum, McClellan, and Black, who had joined either for prestige or to block the efforts of Republican extremists to use the organization openly as a political machine. Republicans later claimed, indeed, that after 1884 Democratic officeholders poured into the society. With Cleveland's victory, Democrats clamored for recognition. Grand Army departments urged their more prominent Democratic members for cabinet positions: the Kansas G.A.R. recommended C. W. Blair, California pressed Rosecrans, and the New Jersey Department would have been highly pleased with McClellan's appointment. Politicians seconded these pleas. One Democrat wrote that his party could not "succeed if it does not win and hold the soldier vote in the 'doubtful states.' McClellan Hancock or Rosecrans in the War Department would bury the so called 'bloody shirt' and strengthen the Democracy in the fight for the new Congress." Others stressed the expediency of appointing former soldiers to minor positions, particularly as pension agents, where they might do a little recruiting among the boys.[3]

[3] Washington *National Tribune*, June 9, 1887; *Public Opinion* (Washington and New York, 1886–1906), III, 209; H. W. Pond, Special Orders and Resolutions of Kansas G.A.R., n.p., n.d., Cleveland MSS.; Frank T. Lynch to Cleveland, February 11, 1885, *ibid.;* newspaper clipping, no heading, among letters of February 4, 1885, *ibid.;* R. M. Apgar to Cleveland, January 30, 1885, *ibid.;* recommendations of California G.A.R. members, February, 1885, *ibid.;* J. Trowbridge to *id.*, February 11, 1885, *ibid.;* T. D. Gorman to Lamont, February 28, 1885, *ibid.;* Hiram Cook to Cleveland, January 6, 1885, *ibid.;* George B. Reed to Hon. A. Bleecker Banks, February 5, 1885, *ibid.;* William P. Tomlinson to Cleveland, November 10, 1885, *ibid.;* Charles Whitehead to Lamont, February 12, 1885, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune*, January 1, 15, 1885; Myers,

Meanwhile, the aggressive Grand Army leaders embarked on a campaign to turn the society against Cleveland. Their first cry was the charge that the President was discriminating against veterans in appointments. A Democratic member complained that "Logan" agents were "hunting up these matters" and added, "The Democratic Soldiers of the Grand Army of the Republic, will not be swayed by Logan, mark that." [4] But the belligerent Republicans were determined to convince Democratic as well as Republican members that Cleveland opposed their interests.

They were aided by a remarkably naïve attitude on the part of Republican veteran-officeholders. Many of these soldiers had won appointments on the assurance of their sponsors that they were "good" or "active" party members as well as popular among their comrades. Yet they expected to retain their positions under the party which they had opposed and while office-hungry adherents were clamoring for recognition. Many of the veterans who complained to Harrison about their removal for "partisanship" boasted that they had refused to renounce active support of the Republicans. Those who saw their places taken by other servicemen were irritated enough; the ones ousted by civilians felt humiliated and insulted. One veterans' periodical admitted that the Democratic volunteer deserved his belated turn at the public trough but insisted that he should be appointed only at the expense of the Republican civilian official.[5]

Politicians who expected to make political capital of this issue welcomed the rapid development of that society within a society, the Veterans' Rights Union. Since its birth in 1882 this organization had been extremely active in New York State. It achieved a major triumph in 1885 when, by questioning candidates

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McClellan, 506; newspaper clipping, no heading, among letters of February 5, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; *Dictionary of American Biography,* XVI, 164.

[4] Isaiah B. McDonald to Lamont, December 16, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; A. A. Carnahan to *id.,* December 27, 1885, *ibid.*

[5] Oliver C. Terry to Harrison, December 5, 1885, Harrison MSS.; J. H. Kimberlin to *id.,* December 24, 1885, *ibid.;* John Overmeyer to *id.,* January 14, 1886, *ibid.;* R. I. Patterson to *id.,* January 17, 1886, *ibid.;* J. B. Ballon to *id.,* March 8, 1886, *ibid.;* W. H. Coon to *id.,* March 10, 1886, *ibid.;* William H. Hisson to *id.,* September 20, 1886, *ibid.;* Boston *Bivouac,* December, 1885, p. 468; editorial, "Spare the Veterans," *ibid.,* January, 1885, p. 27; McDonald to Lamont, December 16, 1885, Cleveland MSS.

for the state legislature, it succeeded in pushing through a veteran-preference bill. The V.R.U. spread rapidly to other states after Cleveland's election. Joseph W. Kay, prominent leader, headed a delegation to visit the President in May, 1885. Kay stated the fundamental principle of his society: when a civilian and a veteran with equal qualifications applied for the same position, the latter should receive preference. Cleveland replied that he constantly gave full weight to this consideration. At the close of the interview he heartily assured the delegates, "Keep within bounds, ask nothing unreasonable, and I shall do my part." Lemon, expressing satisfaction over Cleveland's attitude, announced his belief that the President intended "to do justice to the ex-soldier." He concluded, "We shall watch with interest the carrying out of these intentions." At the national Grand Army encampment of 1885, Commander in Chief John S. Kountz praised the V.R.U. highly; the encampment expressed official endorsement and recommended that the departments establish branches. The delegates also requested Cleveland to issue an executive order making veteran preference mandatory in all appointments.[6]

Thus encouraged, the society flourished. It was particularly active in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and most successful in Kansas, where leaders won a law similar to that passed in New York. The various state leagues divided their attention between lobbying for state legislation and harassing Cleveland with complaints that his appointments discriminated against Union veterans and favored Confederates. The agitators sometimes forgot that Section 1754 applied only to the disabled volunteers. Assuming that service alone constituted the basis for preference, the leagues recounted numerous instances of dismissals. Cleveland promised investigations, but undoubtedly his subordinates ousted many Republican soldiers. The administration's determination to turn out Republican officeholders, whether they were veterans or not, received wide publicity from the V.R.U. branches.[7]

[6] Washington *National Tribune*, January 14, March 25, May 14, July 16, August 6, 27, September 17, 24, October 8, 15, 29, 1885, January 7, May 13, 1886; *Journal 19th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 31, 172; S. S. Burdett, John S. Kountz, and others to Cleveland, July 21, 1885, Cleveland MSS.

[7] Washington *National Tribune*, December 3, 10, 1885, March 25, 1886; unsigned letter to Cleveland, December 30, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; Nicholas W.

The Department of the Potomac G.A.R., composed mainly of government employees, had always displayed particular interest in the preference issue. Before Cleveland's election, Department Commander S. S. Burdett had announced that since soldiers held the balance of power in every doubtful state, they could easily "dictate" and "enforce" preference regulations. Within two months after Cleveland's election, the department's employment committee organized to fight the "influential element" in Washington which was "antagonistic" to the Grand Army, "clamoring for places, and endeavoring to influence those in power to make wholesale discharges." Cleveland received this committee cordially, and expressed "full sympathy" with its requests.[8]

But within a few weeks, the committee was complaining that members were rapidly losing their jobs. In another bill of particulars which it drew up for the President, it estimated that 30 per cent of the Washington federal employees were veterans, while 40 per cent of the administration's dismissals came from that class. Again came the plaint that there had previously been "little reason to criticize failure to *retain* a veteran, once appointed." Indignantly quoting the remark of an executive officer that "the soldier business is played out," the chairman recommended to his department the organization of a V.R.U. branch.[9]

Accordingly a national council of the Veterans' Rights Union was established early in 1886 at Washington, from which vantage point the leaders could visit Cleveland and his cabinet members. The President, begging the officers to press only the cases of competent veterans, promised to do all he could to reinstate the

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Day and others to *id.*, February 17, 1886, *ibid.;* W. E. W. Ross to *id.*, December 30, 1885, *ibid.;* J. I. Sayles to *id.*, October 18, 1886, *ibid.;* *id.* to *id.*, January 1, 1887, *ibid.;* J. W. Kay to *id.*, December 3, 1886, *ibid.;* David L. Gitt to *id.*, January 9, 1886, *ibid.;* *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of the Potomac* (1886–1922), *18th Encampment*, 9.

[8] Quoted in circular, W. S. Odell, chairman general committee, and J. B. Burke, chairman executive committee, National Veterans' Rights Union to "the Ex-Union Soldiers of the United States," July 24, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; N. M. Brooks, Department Commander, and Jerome B. Burke, S.V.C., "Address to the President and Cabinet," April 8, 1885, *ibid.;* *Proceedings 18th Encampment Department of Potomac G.A.R.*, 1886, 45–47.

[9] *Proceedings 18th Encampment Department of Potomac G.A.R.*, 48–50; Newton M. Brooks, Department Commander, and others, "Request from Department of Potomac G.A.R.," May 20, 1885, Cleveland MSS.

unjustly dismissed soldiers. The council's influence was effective —at least to some degree; members claimed that at their urging Cleveland intervened to save the jobs of many former soldiers in the Treasury, War, Navy and Interior departments. The council believed its influence to be particularly effective in checking Pension Bureau dismissals. The Department of the Potomac G.A.R.'s employment committee reported that as a result of the council's "advanced position," 90 of the committee's 185 application endorsements had been accepted.[10]

Cleveland, indeed, seemed sincere in his expressions of willingness to protect the competent officeholder; the New York Grand Army recognized this in 1886 when it wired him that it approved his "conscientious discharge" of "patriotic duty." Commander in Chief S. S. Burdett, who had discussed the matter with the President in 1885, commented a year later that he was "profoundly impressed" with Cleveland's "generous treatment" of Grand Army members. V.R.U. officers admitted that the President's intervention had saved many veterans from dismissal.[11]

But the organization was not easily appeased. Joseph W. Kay, prominent leader, continued to press Cleveland for an executive order on preference, while the national council issued a long circular assuring veterans that Section 1754 guaranteed all former soldiers preference in appointments. The Potomac G.A.R. was no less active. Its efforts to extract from the Civil Service Commission a statement that disabled veterans must be chosen regardless of their examination record were futile; the commissioner insisted that a rating of sixty-five was an essential prerequisite to eligibility.[12]

[10] Washington *National Tribune*, May 14, June 4, October 22, November 5, 1885, April 4, 15, 22, 1886; Odell and Burke to Cleveland, June 19, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; *id. to id.*, July 9, 1886, *ibid.;* circular, Odell and Burke, National Veterans Rights Union to "the Ex-Union Soldiers of the United States," July 24, 1886, *ibid.; Proceedings 19th Encampment Department of Potomac G.A.R.*, 1887, p. 43.

[11] Telegram, H. Clay Hall, to Cleveland, April 21, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; Kay to *id.*, July 28, 1886, *ibid.;* John C. Black to *id.*, July 19, 1886, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune*, November 5, 1885; circular, Odell and Burke, National Veterans Rights Union, to "the Ex-Union Soldiers of the United States," July 24, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; Harrison to B. C. McCallum, December 18, 1885, E. F. Tibbott Transcripts (1884–96), Harrison MSS.

[12] Circular, Odell and Burke, National Veterans Rights Union, to "the Ex-

As might have been expected, agitation of this issue was echoed in Congress. A Republican House member—an old soldier—introduced a bill to retain veteran-appointees, but the Democratic-controlled committee rejected it. Republican senators welcomed the opportunity to capitalize on the anxiety of soldier office-holders. Harrison told one apprehensive veteran that Cleveland's promise to let Republicans complete their terms unless guilty of "offensive partisanship" was couched in such general terms as to be worthless. "The fact that you are a crippled soldier will enable us to make some stronger opposition to your removal; but . . . if they attempt to change they will find some Democratic crippled soldier and endeavor to run him in." [13]

Under the leadership of Senator George F. Edmunds, who was determined to prove that Cleveland was dismissing civil officers for political reasons, the Senate demanded papers concerning removal of a civilian Republican for partisanship. When Cleveland refused, the Judiciary Committee submitted a condemnatory report containing a resolution that Section 1754 should be faithfully executed. Replacing a soldier with a civilian, the committee's majority admonished, violated the spirit of the law, the people's gratitude, constitutional liberty, and governmental integrity. Inclusion of this pronouncement in a report having nothing to do with veterans may have been Ingalls' idea; he was the most outspoken champion of servicemen on the committee. The minority report asserted that this unauthorized insertion merely proved that the whole investigation was a partisan attempt to convict Cleveland of breaking his pledge. A plaintive note appeared in the reminder that to this point only Republican veterans had benefited from Section 1754.[14]

Union Soldiers of the United States," July 24, 1886, Cleveland MSS; Washington *National Tribune*, November 18, 1886; Woods, "The G.A.R. and Civil Service," 50 ff.

[13] Woods, "The G.A.R. and Civil Service," 40; Harrison to William H. Clark, January 22, 1885, Tibbott Transcripts, Harrison MSS.; Harrison to Thomas H. Prince, February 19, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to W. D. Smith, May 25, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to Gen. T. J. Lucas, December 11, 1885, *ibid.; id.* to G. I. Reed, January 23, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to Capt. T. M. Kirkpatrick, March 1, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to John E. Cass, April 15, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to O. A. Somers, June 25, 1886, *ibid.*

[14] *Senate Reports*, No. 135, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., February 18, 1886, Pt. 1, p. 12; *ibid.*, Pt. 2, pp. 21–22; Selig Adler, "The Senatorial Career of George Franklin Edmunds, 1866–1891" (abstract, doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois,

But Republican senators could not be lectured into abandoning such useful ammunition. Senator Harrison planned a campaign leaflet in which he quoted statistics gathered from Indiana as well as extracts from the Potomac G.A.R. employment committee's report. After using this report in a Senate speech, he had copies distributed to Indiana Grand Army posts. Then he requested a revised list of Indiana veterans' removals for use in his opening campaign address as well as on the Senate floor. He made good use of this material in his re-election campaign.[15]

If veterans saw no political motive behind the agitation over removals of soldiers, Democrats were convinced that one was present. One man, denouncing the Baltimore V.R.U. branch, wrote that for years incompetent veterans had held "high class clerkships." Their champions admitted that if deprived of government positions these men would have to acknowledge their physical incapacity and enter soldiers' homes. Yet it was "common talk" that when Democrats took control of the government, soldiers would lose their jobs and pensions on political grounds. "What would soon be the average intelligence if physical weakness was the only potent recommendation for employment?" The writer concluded, "These men entrenched behind public sympathy have controlled the service in this city for twenty years. I cannot give Genl Ross credit for honesty when he says his order is not partisan or political. There are many in Washington who know to the contrary, where merciless unrelenting war has been waged solely on the issue by his clan." A Kansas Democrat complained that Republicans were encouraging the Grand Army to criticize "every app't [*sic*] of an ex-confederate." One Democratic newspaper condemned the *Grand Army Sentinel*'s claim that of the 2,748 soldiers appointed to office only 98 were on the Union

1934), 9; Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 380 ff.; Bancroft (ed.), *Speeches, Correspondence and Political Papers of Schurz*, IV, 414–36, 438.

[15] Harrison to Michener, April 16, 1886, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to Gen. George B. Williams, April 1, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to Gen. James R. Carnahan, April 7, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to Michener, April 9, 1886, *ibid.*; list of soldier appointments and removals in Indiana post offices, 1885, *ibid.*; George T. Miller to Michener, April 26, 1886, *ibid.*; Harrison to Hon. J. A. Wildman, April 1, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to Michener, March 11, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to Gen. John Coburn, April 15, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to William H. Clark, September 20, 1886, *ibid.*; Scrapbook II, *ibid.*

side: "It is such miserable, lying hogwash . . . that often casts upon the G.A.R. the odium of being a political organization." Another commented: ". . . there is no doubt that such statements are made for the purpose of prejudicing Grand Army men against the administration. . . ." [16]

While aggressive Grand Army leaders hoped that the preference issue would arouse members against the administration, the conservative group continued its emphasis upon the society's nonpolitical aspect. And, in fact, the G.A.R. could point to outstanding achievements. It could claim credit for many state laws establishing homes for veterans and for soldiers' orphans, an important accomplishment in a period when national homes were crowded beyond capacity. The veterans' homes were so packed, Harrison wrote, that it was "impossible to get a needy and deserving soldier into them." [17]

Moreover, indigent veterans and their families received cash allotments from post, department, and national Grand Army funds. When posts suffered calamities—fires, floods, epidemics—contributions poured in upon them from comrades throughout the country in response to appeals from national and department headquarters. One example was the "terrible" Louisiana yellow-fever epidemic of 1879; another was the Pensacola, Florida, epidemic in 1883, when almost every post sent contributions to the yellow-fever victims. The following year an entreaty from Ohio headquarters for assistance to flood victims brought quick response. In 1886 national headquarters reported charity disbursements of $176,259.87 to 11,313 comrades and 4,147 nonmembers. The *National Tribune* estimated that the society as a whole spent from two to three millions yearly on charity and that scarcely more than a third of the recipients were members.[18]

[16] Gitt to Cleveland, January 9, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; A. A. Carnahan to Lamont, December 27, 1885, *ibid.;* Michigan City *Dispatch,* quoted in La Porte (Ind.) *Argus,* February 18, 1886; comment of *Argus, ibid.,* clipping enclosure in George L. Andrew to Logan, February 19, 1886, Harrison MSS.

[17] Report of Commander in Chief Burdett, *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.,* 323–32; Washington *National Tribune,* April 25, July 5, 1883; Hosea Whitford Rood, *History of Wisconsin Veterans' Home 1886–1926* (Madison, 1926), 21, 32–33, 71; Harrison to Saliday, December 23, 1885, Harrison MSS.; *Journal 17th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 7; *House Reports,* No. 2676, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., Pt. 2, No. 2676, March 3, 1885.

[18] Washington *National Tribune,* September 27, 1883, July 24, 1884, March

Posts raised most of their charity funds by sponsoring picnics, theatrical productions, lectures, and concerts. Such occasions, of considerable importance in the social life of small communities, seemed to many the *summum bonum* of the society. Other gatherings—campfires, summer encampments, reunions—had no purpose beyond fraternization; these attracted more public attention as the Grand Army expanded. At Philadelphia in 1876, the national encampment made an especially imposing display; and by the middle of the 1880's, both state and national encampments were highly important affairs involving lavish financial outlay and weeks of preparation. For the encampment of 1883 the Colorado legislature voted twenty thousand dollars, Denver authorities set aside a similar sum, and the Union Pacific Railroad provided a large camp site.[19]

During these assemblies the boys took over the city, and in a pervasively festive atmosphere the general public had almost as much of a holiday as the former soldiers. For the encampment of 1888 at Columbus, some forty thousand veterans and sixty thousand of their friends and families descended upon the residential population of eighty thousand. Mrs. Joseph Foraker commented, "Twenty thousand soldiers marched. There was a thrill about it unlike all thrills since. . . . Eight hundred people, everyone of them somebody in public life, were on that [reviewing] stand. . . . We had brought our luncheons with us and stayed where we were till after five o'clock. . . . It was like a glorified picnic." [20]

Drunkenness at these encampments was rare. Sherman ob-

10, 1887; *Proceedings Ohio G.A.R., 19th Encampment*, 23; *Proceedings 13th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 597, 631; *Journal 20th National Encampment G.A.R.* 1886, p. 67; Noyes, "History of the G.A.R. in Ohio, 1866 to 1900," 230–65.

[19] Mary J. Cutler, *Memories of Andrew Simon Cutler* (n.p., 1907), 111 ff., 123 ff., 146–49; Noyes, "History of the G.A.R. in Ohio, 1866 to 1900," 164–94; Donald L. McMurry, "The Soldier Vote in Iowa in the Election of 1888," in *Iowa Journal of History and Politics* (Iowa City, 1903–), XVIII (1920), 338; Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, July 1, 1876; *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 428; Washington *National Tribune*, May 15, 1883.

[20] Sherman, "Camp Fires of the G.A.R.," *loc. cit.*, 497; Julia B. Foraker, *I Would Live It Again, Memories of a Vivid Life* (New York, 1932), 117–18; Boston *Bivouac*, July, 1883, 214.

served not a single inebriated man at the 1888 gathering; an English observer reported only one case at the 1891 encampment. During this assembly, to be sure, the California delegation drew eager crowds of "guzzlers" to their open house, which was maintained with contributions from the generous producers of their state. But drinking at reunions never became sufficiently general to draw public condemnation. At the close of the 1898 encampment, in fact, the remark was current among disappointed Cincinnati saloonkeepers that the boys brought "a five dollar bill and a shirt, and didn't change either." [21]

Veterans were attracted in large numbers to Grand Army encampments not only by the general excitement but also by the desire to renew acquaintance with wartime buddies at the regimental reunions and evening campfires. "This rekindling of old friendships," one observer commented, "would almost by itself justify all the trouble and expense of these festivities; and certainly the veterans themselves think so." An occasional citizen regarded the reunions with jaundiced eye, as did the correspondent who irritably inquired, "Will somebody please tell us what use there is in everlastingly howling over the war that was twenty years ago? . . . The thing is over. What is the use of talking about it for a hundred years?" But apparently this reaction was exceptional; the majority sympathized with the urge of the aging veteran to reunite periodically with his comrades.[22]

Another Grand Army project that kept the organization prominently in the public view was its unswerving determination to cover the land with statues and memorial halls. This interest, manifested as early as the 1868 encampment, steadily mounted. As a result of the members' contributions and soliciting efforts, thousands of more or less tasteless monuments sprang up throughout the North. Posts inspired and supported the work of the Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association; after Grant's death they took special interest in collections for a memorial to their hero.[23]

[21] Sherman, "Camp Fires of the G.A.R.," *loc. cit.*, 497; "Grand Army of the Republic," *Macmillan's Magazine* (London, 1859–1907), LXV (December, 1891), 131; *Proceedings 25th Encampment California G.A.R.*, 1892, pp. 30, 71; Washington *National Tribune*, July 2, 1885; recollections of Frederick Rulkotter.

[22] "Grand Army of the Republic," *loc. cit.*, 131; Boston *Bivouac*, July, 1883, p. 208.

[23] *Proceedings First to Tenth National Encampments, G.A.R.*, 27, 177; *Proceedings 14th National Encampment, G.A.R.*, 721; Washington *National Trib-*

If the general public was developing a preference for the picnic ground over the cemetery on Decoration Day, it was nonetheless touched by the Grand Army's continued sponsorship of memorial services. The *National Tribune* urged that G.A.R. men make the most of the day in order to impress the nation with "the immensity of the obligation it is under to the men who preserved it." Under this encouragement, members donned their dark blue every May 31 and eagerly participated in the solemn exercises. Praise for the ceremonies was by no means universal; in 1883 the New York *Tribune* asserted, "It is unwise and indecent to take the old grievances out of their graves once a year in order to magnify the courage of the men who died for them." This journal complained that the day was debased by the "unlimited buncombe" with which the politician tried to increase his popularity in his own section "by abusing the other." The national encampment's official reminder to members that the services were designed to preserve the memories "only" of those who fought for the Union seemed to vindicate objections that the ceremonies fostered sectionalism.[24]

But blasts like that of the New York *Tribune* were becoming rare and had no apparent influence on public opinion. Although the average citizen was not drawn from the picnic ground by the Grand Army's officially expressed disapprobation for "indulgence in public sports, pastimes and all amusements on Memorial Day," he at least respected the members' feelings. Municipal governments grew increasingly generous in voting contributions for the ceremonies. A young man of this period later wrote feelingly of the "Decoration Day parades headed by a fife and drum corps playing shrilly but oh so gloriously, 'Rally 'Round the Flag, Boys, Rally once again.' . . . When the bullet-shattered flags of the Grand Army of the Republic were carried along Broadway and

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une, August 23, 1883; George L. Kilmer, "The G.A.R. as Seen from the Inside," in *Century Magazine,* XL (May, 1890), 155; "Circular Letter No. 5," Grant Memorial, April, 1889, *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.,* 1889, p. 232; contributions for Logan monument, *ibid.,* 161–62; Hayes to Burdett, July 29, 1885, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes,* IV, 224–26; entries for July 24, 26, August 7, 1885, *ibid.*

[24] Washington *National Tribune,* April 26, 1883; New York *Tribune,* May 30, 1883; Boston *Bivouac,* May, 1883, p. 151; *ibid.,* June, 1885, p. 226; *Proceedings Department of Maine 1877–1883, Inclusive* (Lewiston, 1884), 1881, p. 87; William K. Spring to Cleveland, May 25, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; *Proceedings 11th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 473–74.

lower Fifth Avenue . . . our hearts beat faster, our eyes filled with tears, our thoughts instantly went back to the awful conflict, then so tragically close to home. Heroes? Of course; to us, they were heroes—every one of them! They could do no wrong—certainly none we would not promptly forget and forgive." [25]

The increasing newspaper publicity that these various activities received during the 1880's undoubtedly widened the society's nonpartisan reputation and served as a recruiting stimulant second only to the organization's pension program. In 1885 the Boston *Bivouac* commented with satisfaction, "There are everywhere indications of a growing national feeling of respect for the veterans of the civil war and of gratitude for their services." In this period the affectionate term "old soldier" became general. These developments were in accordance with the aims of the Grand Army's conservative leaders.[26]

But the quiet technique was too slow for the militant officers, whose efforts to make the organization a fermenting core of animosity to Cleveland became progressively more blatant. Unexpected encouragement came with the sudden revival of the timeworn sectional issue. During the 1884 campaign, this had been an undercurrent; but when Blaine attributed his defeat largely to a solid South based on Negro disfranchisement, journalist Murat Halstead publicized the pronouncement. He warned, moreover, that the South's attitude presaged a revived sectionalism. Immediately the New York *Tribune* adopted the cry and led the Republican press in an emotional attack on the South. When John Sherman won the Ohio campaign on this issue in 1885, his brother predicted that the victory would "introduce the 'Bloody Shirt' as a part of Republican doctrine." [27]

The more belligerent Grand Army leaders, ignoring conserva-

[25] *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 174–75; *Maine G.A.R. Proceedings 1877–1883*, 87; Washington *National Tribune*, May 12, 1887; New York *Tribune*, May 31, 1889; Boston *Bivouac*, May, 1883, p. 151; *ibid.*, June, 1885, p. 226; Henry L. Stoddard, *As I Knew Them*, 51; *Proceedings Massachusetts G.A.R. 1881–1887*, 1882, p. 8; Washington *National Tribune*, June 7, 28, 1883; Chicago *Tribune*, May 31, 1887; Boston *Bivouac*, June, 1885, p. 229.

[26] Boston *Bivouac*, June, 1885, p. 229; John D. Alexander to Harrison, September 27, 1886, Harrison MSS.

[27] Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 269; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, undated, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 367; Claude G. Bowers, *Beveridge and the Progressive Era* (New York, 1932), 31.

tive anxiety that the society might appear partisan, fell into step with the *Tribune*. Deliberately planning to inspire members with active hatred for the South as well as for the administration, they suggested that Cleveland's policies gave the defeated section the supremacy it had failed to establish in the field. At the Ohio encampment of 1886, Governor Joseph B. Foraker—proud of being the first private Union soldier to attain a governorship and of his Grand Army badge, which he flaunted for political prestige—denounced southerners for garlanding Jefferson Davis "with the flowers of a hero" at a mammoth Confederate reunion. Corporal James Tanner, ridiculing the homage of the feminine element, remarked that it was no new experience for Davis to be "surrounded" by crinoline. These comments, publicized throughout the country, evoked a flood of letters and telegrams.[28]

The *National Tribune* hastened to join the attack, and soon many old-soldiers' gatherings were applauding expressions of distrust for the South. The New York *Tribune*, terming the assemblies "high festivals of patriotism," inadvertently revealed their purpose: "These reunions are more than mere social interchanges. The soldiers . . . can forgive, but they can never forget. Hence these gatherings serve to keep alive in the land the valiant spirit of loyalty." [29]

Particularly effective in reviving bitterness was the influence of "Uncle Billy" Sherman, idol of the old soldiers. Perhaps because of his growing receptiveness to reunion invitations, the general's popularity developed steadily despite his refusal to sanction pension demands. Affection rose to wild enthusiasm when at the national encampment of 1886 he insisted upon sitting with the rank and file. The boys, in fact, acted like "excited children" in his presence. Their attitude at Grand Army encampments showed clearly that he and Sheridan were their idols, while Grant was much less popular and Meade completely forgotten. At the national encampment of 1884, for example, "the enthusiasm for

[28] Brown County (Ohio) *Democrat*, quoted in Washington *National Tribune*, October 11, 1883; Chicago *Tribune*, July 27, 1887; Joseph Benson Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life* (Cincinnati, 1916), 2 vols., I, 232–33; Washington *National Tribune*, May 6, 1886; Harrison to Thomas Foley, May 15, 1886, Tibbott Transcripts, Harrison MSS.

[29] New York *Tribune*, June 23, 1887; Washington *National Tribune*, May 6, 1886.

General Sherman, when appearing among the boys on the streets or in the camp, and the determination to possess his attention in response, was irresistible." [30]

Sherman made no effort to conceal the progressive changes by which his original attitude of generosity toward the South turned sour, and undoubtedly his views were influential. Immediately after Cleveland's victory, Sherman joined the revived crusade against the South. At the dedication of a Grand Army hall in St. Louis, he claimed to have seen letters proving Davis a conspirator for secession long before Lincoln's election. When Democratic papers protested and Davis himself demanded proof, the general replied in an article. The Republican press and soldiers' publications gave him full support, while veterans eagerly praised their leader. "When the President of the defunct Confederacy . . . calls General Sherman a liar," the Colorado G.A.R. commander told his encampment, ". . . it is time for the old Grand Army to stop this nonsense about 'the blue and the gray.' . . ." Sherman was stimulated to further vituperation: ". . . in my opinion the English language is not rich enough to slander Jeff Davis," he announced, ". . . we should scotch the snake of which Davis is the head." [31]

Old Tecumseh's bitterness soon widened to include the administration, which he declared was elevating former Confederates over their victors in the field. Cleveland had appointed so many "open Rebels," he wrote, that foreign governments might assume that the South had been right and was only "overcome by brute force and numbers." Insisting that "treasonable" sentiment pervaded the South, the general defended his brother for waving the bloody shirt: "He is right, and it is an insult to us who fought

[30] W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, July 14, 1884, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, July 24, 1884, September 16, 1886; W. T. Sherman to Fairchild, September 19, 1885, Fairchild MSS.; Foraker, *I Would Live It Again*, 116; "Grand Army of the Republic," *loc. cit.*, 131.

[31] Washington *National Tribune*, October, 1879; W. T. Sherman to Hon. Edward McPherson, November 28, 1884, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 362; *id.* to John Sherman, December 4, 1884, *ibid.*, 362–66; *id.* to *id.*, December 7, 1884, *ibid.;* John Sherman to W. T. Sherman, December 10, 1884, *ibid.; Proceedings Colorado Encampments G.A.R.*, "Address of Commander B. L. Carr," 1885, p. 14; Washington *National Tribune*, January 15, 1885, May 13, 1886; C. K. Davis to Sherman, January 29, 1885, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Schurz to Thomas F. Bayard, May 6, 1886, in Bancroft (ed.), *Speeches, Correspondence and Political Papers of Schurz*, IV, 438.

the war that our enemies whom we defeated in arms now dominate us in peace. . . ." [32]

Second only to Sherman in prominence among veterans was the "Black Eagle," who continued to rant against southerners. Two chapters of Logan's *Great Conspiracy*, published in 1886, discussed efforts of former Confederate leaders to nullify the Union's victory. Immediately after the peace, he asserted, the "old leaders and their successors" began to rebuild the "ruined foundations . . . of the Lost Cause." [33]

Because of their interest in pension legislation, many Grand Army members were eager to join the politicians' campaign against the South. The bloody shirt, in keeping the veterans' military service prominently before the public, might well aid the movements for pensions and veteran preference. The Iowa Grand Army announced, "We shall never yield the claim that the men who stood in the Union army or those who fought for the Union, are superior in every claim of remembrance and gratitude upon the government to those who fought to destroy the Union. . . . As soldiers we ask, that this Nation shall remember those whose loyalty saved its life." Thus, while stretching out one hand for more pensions, the *National Tribune* pointed the other accusingly at those southerners who were glorifying former Confederate leaders.[34]

As denunciation of Cleveland and of the South became more virulent, Grand Army speakers placed greater emphasis upon patriotism. Commander William Warner urged the Missouri encampment to teach the rising generation that "loyalty is a virtue to be cherished; that it is the shibboleth of true citizenship, and that treason is a crime." An inevitable corollary of this emphasis was a heightened jingoism; Republicans repeatedly asserted that Cleveland was sacrificing the national prestige saved by the boys in blue. The *National Tribune* turned its vituperation on

[32] W. T. Sherman to his wife, June 15, 1887, in Howe (ed.), *Home Letters of Sherman*, 395.

[33] Logan, *The Great Conspiracy*, 652, 655, 666; W. T. Sherman, "Grant, Thomas, Lee," in *North American Review*, CXLIV (May, 1887), 437–50; Porter to Lamont, May 9, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

[34] *Journal 13th Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, 1887, p. 99; *Proceedings Encampments Colorado G.A.R.*, 1885, pp. 13, 14; *Journal 10th Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, 23; Washington *National Tribune*, July 29, December 17, 1885, May 13, 1886.

Germany for discriminating against American hogs and denounced Cleveland for failing to block German aggressions in Samoa. Again, veterans willingly followed their leaders; here was another opportunity to spotlight themselves as defenders of national integrity. Taking their cue from the *National Tribune*, former soldiers plagued the administration with demands for a more aggressive foreign policy. Leaders of the struggling peace movement found it uphill work to contend against the rising martial spirit so carefully nurtured by the boys.[35]

In logical sequence to the veterans' endorsement of bloody-shirt and jingoistic nationalism came their expression of highly conservative economic doctrines. During the 1870's, Grand Army leaders had occasionally identified loyalty with the necessity for extirpating economic radicalism, but the wealthy classes were insufficiently impressed with the value of veterans' support to endorse pension legislation. Aggressive Editor Lemon, fully cognizant of the situation, used economic issues as a club with which to force consent to further concessions. By 1882 he was supporting labor against capital and endorsing the right to strike. Lemon admitted that his resentment stemmed from the property holders' resistance to the pension movement; he described capitalists as "ingrates" who owed their prosperity to the soldiers' valor: " 'Brave Boys,' shouted the capitalist when he saw our veterans march away and trembled lest his bonds should not be paid. 'Insatiable gluttons,' he calls them now when he sees them knocking at the doors of Congress and knows that his bonds are safe." Lemon warned against the danger of monopoly and praised Grand Master Workman Terence V. Powderly of the Knights of Labor.[36]

Congressman William Peters Hepburn of Iowa, a lieutenant

[35] *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Missouri* (1882–1939), *3rd Encampment,* 1884, p. 18; Washington *National Tribune,* August 7, 14, December 17, 1884, April 30, 1885, August 18, 19, September 2, 1886, October 20, 1887, January 31, February 7, 14, June 20, 1889; Fairchild's draft of speech, November 7, 1885, Fairchild MSS.; *Proceedings Annual Sessions Encampments Department of Nebraska* (1882–1943), *11th Encampment,* 81; *Official Record of First Meeting National Association of Naval Veterans of the United States at New York City* (Chicago, 1887), 19, 20; Merle Curti, *Peace or War, the American Struggle, 1636–1936* (New York, 1936), 73, 84.

[36] Washington *National Tribune,* June 3, 1882, January 18, July 26, 1883, April 30, 1885, April 1, 1886.

colonel during the war and an ardent champion of pension legislation, was even more direct. Complaining that "the rich man" opposed increased pensions, he sounded "a note of warning":

> Who is . . . in most peril from disturbance in this land? Where is it that there is unrest and disquiet because of communism, socialism, anarchism and the many kindred political vices that are now current in this country? . . . It is in those same centers of wealth; and the people there, of all others need to keep perfect faith with the soldiers. . . . whenever, if ever, the trial comes between the new ideas of confiscation and the old ideas of law and order, those who own the wealth will have to appeal to the conservatism of the farm-owners and village-owners of this country, and there is where the old soldiers are to be found.[37]

But this apostasy was a passing phase; soon Lemon was supporting those Republicans who urged veterans to repudiate "un-American" economic doctrines. Chauncey Depew told the Society of the Army of the Potomac in 1887 that only "the spirit of patriotism" could preserve the republic. Americans did not "want the assistance of the red flag." [38]

Veterans were impressed with this appeal to crush "treasonable" radical doctrines; they found in the mounting tide of labor disturbances an appropriate vehicle for self-glorification. The G.A.R. became the principal agency through which former soldiers absorbed conservative principles, and in the eyes of labor the society was soon identified with the capitalist enemy. In 1883 the Central Labor Union of New York protested against the state legislature's measure furnishing arms to posts. The union explained that railroad companies wanted Grand Army men armed "to shoot down laborers." [39]

The Grand Army's official attitude seemed to confirm these suspicions. During the Milwaukee riots of 1886, Wisconsin posts tendered their services to the state administration; and General

[37] *Cong. Record,* 49 Cong., 2 Sess., February 24, 1887, pp. 22, 23.

[38] New York *Tribune,* June 23, 1887; *Proceedings Reunion Society of Vermont Officers,* November 20, 1889, p. 32; Harrisburg *Field and Post Room,* May, 1886, p. 69.

[39] *Proceedings 8th Encampment Kansas G.A.R.,* 1889, p. 76; Washington *National Tribune,* March 22, 1883.

Fairchild proposed that the governor summon the whole department to suppress the disorder. The Indiana department pointed to "anarchists, nihilists, communists, socialists, atheists," as menaces to the principles for which the soldiers fought, and pledged themselves to protect their "homes and firesides from this pestilence that walketh in darkness." The New Jersey Department, condemning Philadelphia radical societies for habitually parading in Camden under the red flag, urged the legislature to prohibit display of the banner. At the close of the decade Commander in Chief William Warner told the national encampment that the society constituted "the more conservative element of the Nation . . . recognizing the dignity of labor but having no sympathy with anarchy or communism." [40]

In its campaign to imbue the public mind with patriotism and conservatism, the G.A.R. enjoyed the hearty support of its three auxiliary organizations, the Woman's Relief Corps, the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, and the Sons of Veterans. The Sons seconded the Grand Army in its espousal of bloody-shirt doctrine; the society was equally enthusiastic about the Grand Army's crusade for patriotism. In 1888 national headquarters instructed all camps to conduct ceremonies on Lincoln's Birthday, and celebration of this day became an annual custom. Following Lemon's suggestion, the organization trained its initiates in military drill and tactics. By 1890 it had won from many legislatures laws providing state funds for arming and equipping members.[41]

Grand Army policy in the middle of the 1880's was profoundly influenced by two of the most prominent G.A.R. members, Lo-

[40] Rusk to W. J. Zetteler, May 13, 1886, *Jeremiah Rusk Letter Books* (1866–93), Library of Wisconsin State Historical Society, Madison; *id.* to Curtis Post 34, May 13, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to S. L. Blake, May 13, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to Frank T. Russel and Charles B. Clark, May 13, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to T. J. George, May 13, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to Fairchild, May 13, 1886, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune,* April 3, 1884; *Journals Annual Sessions Department of Indiana G.A.R.* (1880–1948), *8th Encampment,* 1887, p. 114; *Proceedings 18th Encampment New Jersey G.A.R.,* 1886, pages unnumbered; *Proceedings 24th Encampment New Jersey G.A.R.,* 1891, pp. 116–17; *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.,* 34; *Proceedings 4th Encampment Missouri G.A.R.,* 1885, p. 18.

[41] *Journal 4th Encampment Sons of Veterans,* 3; *Journal 8th Encampment,* 3, 4, 40; *Journal 9th Encampment,* 25; Washington *National Tribune,* March 24, 31, April 14, 1887.

gan and Fairchild. Their use of the society for personal advantage was irritating to Democrats but unobjectionable to Republican members. Logan, working for the next Republican presidential nomination, continued his tactics of the previous campaign. In 1886 he toured the country, and foremost among his activities was his series of addresses to Grand Army and other gatherings of veterans. One observer commented that the general was the leading aspirant for the Republican nomination: "His strong support would come from the G.A.R. men. . . . If the election were to take place today Logan would defeat any candidate the opposition could nominate by an overwhelming majority." [42]

But the general's clever and ambitious wife was not destined to enjoy residence at the White House. After Logan's sudden death from rheumatic fever, the Michigan lumber king, General Russel A. Alger, prepared to don his friend's mantle; but until he attained national prominence, Fairchild was the Grand Army's most outstanding political leader. Still using veterans' organizations as a springboard to his former prominence, he found his favorite method unavailing in bidding for the Wisconsin senatorship. The general concentrated then on the Grand Army, and rumors became so persistent that he was maneuvering for the Wisconsin commandership in order to make political use of the office that after winning it he publicly denied the charges. While the posts' congratulatory ovations were ringing in his ears, Fairchild was sounding out his friends in other states regarding the coveted national position. The legless "Corporal" James Tanner of Brooklyn was leading the race; but the New York department split over his candidacy, with the result that Fairchild won the 1886 election.[43]

Immediately the new commander adopted a program designed

[42] Washington *National Tribune,* March 24, 1887; John J. Ankery to Cleveland, November 8, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; E. Bouton to Sherman, September 20, 1886, W. T. Sherman MSS.

[43] Griff J. Thomas to Fairchild, November 17, 1884, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to F. L. Phillips, November 24, 1884, *ibid.;* Fairchild to his brother, Charles, April 14, 1886, *ibid.;* Capt. E. G. Miller to Fairchild, April 12, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to *id.,* June 12, 1886, *ibid.;* S. S. Burdett to *id.,* May 18, 1886, *ibid.;* Fairchild to his wife, August 4, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to *id.,* August 7, 1886, *ibid.;* Wallace E. Davies, "Was Lucius Fairchild a Demagogue?" in *Wisconsin Magazine of History,* XXXII (June, 1948), 419; *Proceedings 20th Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.,* 59; Washington *National Tribune,* May 6, 1886.

to draw public attention to himself as well as to interest the veterans. His first official act was a friendly gesture to the South; he visited Charleston earthquake victims to offer them Grand Army aid. The *National Tribune,* supporting Fairchild's appeal for funds, outdid itself in expressions of generosity and good will for the South. G.A.R. members enthusiastically contributed over seven thousand dollars—more than was needed—and the Palmetto Guard, a Confederate veterans' organization, tendered official thanks to the general for his generous action. Fairchild noted with satisfaction the favorable reaction, North as well as South. He next appeared before the public with a vigorous assault on Mormonism, stock property of moralizing politicians. The commander urged all posts to condemn this "great moral and social evil." [44]

The results of these activities soon appeared. A newspaperman promised General Fairchild the vice-presidency in 1888, while the Philadelphia *Record,* observing that in his inspection of posts he was "looking at the condition of some of his Republican neighbors' political fences as he goes along," considered him a strong presidential possibility. Blaine, indeed, it remarked, had "already heard the whispering of a Western breeze bearing the name of Fairchild." Thus encouraged, Fairchild took up the cudgels in the veterans' war against Cleveland, and the President himself presented the commander with his best ammunition.[45]

Except for the debatable point of veterans' dismissals, Cleveland provided Republicans with no evidence of unfriendliness to veterans during his first year in office. Pension Commissioner John C. Black, himself a disabled pensioner, was highly popular with former soldiers, especially among his Grand Army comrades. Republicans might resent Black's charges that the previous man-

[44] Washington *National Tribune,* September 9, 23, October 14, 21, 1886; Resolutions, Palmetto Guard, September 28, 1886, Fairchild MSS.; J. T. Humphreys and others to Fairchild, September 28, 1886, *ibid.;* Fairchild to his wife, September 14, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to his brother, Charles, October 15, 1886, *ibid.;* Watrous to Fairchild, September 9, 1886, *ibid.;* Fairchild to his wife, September 17, 1886, *ibid.; Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.,* 36; *ibid.,* "Circular No. 1," September 14, 1886, "Circular No. 2," October 15, 1886, "Circular No. 3," November 20, 1886, pp. 279–81.

[45] W. E. Gardner to Fairchild, September 24, 1886, Fairchild MSS.; clipping from Philadelphia *Record,* enclosed in John C. Cameron to *id.,* January 17, 1887, *ibid.*

agement of the Pension Bureau had been regrettably partisan, inefficient, and guilty of favoritism; but they could scarcely deny the success of his reorganization. Even Editor Lemon was unable to find cause for complaint, and congratulated him. During the first year of Black's reformed system, the Pension Bureau paid out $808,624,811.57 in pensions—a larger business than at any previous time in its history—yet operation costs were less than they had been under Black's predecessor.[46]

It was Cleveland's zeal for reform that led him into the bad graces of the pension-seekers. The political power that the veterans had attained by 1886 was reflected in the fact that eighty-two veterans sat in the House as well as in the eagerness of congressmen to enact private pension measures for constituents who could not qualify for largess under the law. Harrison had a simple explanation for the mounting number of these cases with each succeeding Congress: ". . . the soldiers are getting old, and many of them are unable to make the strict proof required at the Pension Office. . . ." But Cleveland was undoubtedly closer to the truth in his comment that the ease with which these bills slid through was an open invitation for the presentation of claims "which upon their merits could not survive the test of an examination by the Pension Bureau, and whose only hope of success" depended "upon sympathy, often misdirected, instead of right and justice." [47]

By the middle of the 1880's the House was devoting one meeting weekly to the consideration of private bills, many of which the Pension Bureau had already rejected as unworthy. On these occasions the modicum present accepted bill after bill, without discussion, on the committee's recommendation. The Senate was equally lax. One congressman expressed the wish that the American people could see the way the House passed the measures—

[46] Barry, *Forty Years in Washington*, 170; A. A. Carnahan to Lamont, December 27, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, November 18, December 3, 1885, April 22, July 22, 1886; Black to Cleveland, November 30, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; Cleveland's Second Annual Message, December 6, 1886, in Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 523.

[47] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 75; Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic, 1885–1905* (New York, 1907), 143; Harrison to Thomas Sanders, October 4, 1886, Harrison MSS.; Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 416.

"a dozen or half-dozen of members meeting at night, cross-lifting for each other, and passing them by the dozen without regard to their merits." Cleveland, with his definite conception of executive duty, could not take the easy course of signing these measures and thereby condoning a system obviously in need of reform. Following the method that had "made him a terror to the evildoers of Buffalo and Albany," he carefully reviewed the pension system.[48]

The President's first step was a warning to Congress. Remarking in his first annual message that one Union veteran in ten was receiving a pension, he opined that it was as important to cleanse the pension rolls of fraudulent beneficiaries as to expedite the settlement of new claims.[49] The second step was more than a warning. On May 8, 1886, Cleveland sent a message to Congress regarding nearly 240 special pension bills that had been presented to him on the same day. He had sent them for examination to the Pension Bureau, which had reported to him only a few hours before expiration of the ten-day limit for executive sanction. The bureau had originally dismissed eighty-one of these cases for insufficient proof; these Cleveland approved "on the assumption that the claims were meritorious." Of the remaining cases, the Bureau had denied some because the disability had developed before enlistment; some because it had not been contracted in line of duty; others because it began after discharge; and still others because no provision of the pension laws applied to them. A few had never been submitted to the bureau.

Cleveland believed that many of the bills should be disapproved, but he declared that he was "utterly unable to submit within the time allowed me . . . my objections." They would, therefore, become operative without his sanction. Two bills, however, he did veto: one because the widowed claimant could receive more under the general law; the other because the hasty legislators had made an error in the recipient's name.

Not satisfied with this illustration of congressional careless-

[48] E. Benjamin Andrews, *History of the Last Quarter Century in the United States, 1870–1895* (New York, 1896), 2 vols., II, 111–12; *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., January 21, 1886, p. 285; McElroy, *Grover Cleveland, the Man and the Statesman, An Authorized Biography* (New York, 1923), 2 vols., I, 192.

[49] Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 360.

ness, Cleveland proceeded to lecture the gentlemen on the evils of the private-pension habit. It was extremely doubtful, he believed, whether a congressional committee had better opportunity to judge the merits of claims than the agency which had been vested by law and was fully equipped for their examination. If the bureau lacked sufficient power, Congress should grant more; if the system of the bureau was inadequate, that should be corrected; and if the bureau displayed want of sympathy, it should be reorganized. To be sure, some claims could not be settled fairly under fixed rules; and in these cases, special legislation was justified. The President stated his conviction, however, "that the interposition by special enactment in the granting of pensions should be rare and exceptional." [50]

Congress simply ignored Cleveland's views. As the private-pension acts poured into his office, the President sent them to the bureau for investigation and then laboriously penned a message for each that he decided was unworthy. During his first administration he approved a great many—1,871 of them—but 228 he vetoed. This was something no previous President had dared to do. The disappointed claimants became 228 victims of Cleveland's animosity to veterans—228 rounds of ammunition in the Republican oratorical armament.[51]

Yet the vetoed claims were so obviously fraudulent that under ordinary circumstances Republicans would have found it difficult to convince anyone that their rejection reflected hostility to the nation's saviors. Indeed, Cleveland might have claimed justification in the fact that Republicans were only once successful in their many attempts to pass these bills over his veto. But Cleveland could not resist an occasional satirical stab in discussing some of the absurd bases for claims. In one message, for example, he presented the case of a claimant who had been hospitalized for five of his less than seven weeks of service. "Fifteen years after this brilliant military service and this terrific encounter with the measles," commented the President, "the claimant discovered that his attack of the measles had some relation to his army enrollment

[50] *Ibid.*, 415–17.

[51] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 78–83; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions,* 277; Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* VII, 172, 319, 320, 384.

and that this disease had 'settled in his eyes, also affecting his spinal column.' " [52]

As the deluge of bills continued, Cleveland's patience wore thin, and the ironic comments increased. Periodically he reminded Congress that his chief purpose was the protection of the worthy claimant. The fact that public money had been appropriated for those who had made sacrifices gave "the bestowal of pensions a kind of sacredness which invites the adoption of such principles and regulations as will exclude perversion as well as insure a liberal . . . application." It was unfair to the crippled veteran to place him "side by side on the pension roll with those who have been tempted to attribute the natural ills to which humanity is heir to service in the army." [53]

But Republicans overlooked the President's principles to fasten upon his satire, which they eagerly quoted to veterans. Republican congressmen insisted that Cleveland's overruling of congressional conclusions on matters of fact was unconstitutional. Editor Lemon, ever sensitive where pensions were concerned, questioned the wisdom of the constitutional fathers in providing for an executive veto. The "old rebel element," he complained, was "in the saddle" again; veterans could hope for nothing from a Democratic administration.[54]

Cleveland received many letters from veterans commending his attacks on the "swindlers," a few of them from Grand Army men. One member admitted that his organization was "too often" run as a Republican machine and in the interests of "frauds upon the Government." A delegate to the national encampment requested "ammunition in the shape of the most fraudulent cases" exposed by Cleveland for use during the assembly's pension discussion.[55]

[52] Andrews, *History of the Last Quarter Century,* II, 112; Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* VIII, 418–30, 432–71, 476–84, 539–40, 542–48, 558–63, 566–67, 638–42, 645–51, 659–61, 664–68, 670–71, 674–93, 698–713, 717–22, 727–28, 731–40.

[53] Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* VIII, 423, 437, 466.

[54] Washington *National Tribune,* May 7, July 8, 15, 29, 1886; Edward Campbell Mason, *The Veto Power, Its Origins, Development and Function in the Government of the United States (1789–1889)*, Albert Bushnell Hart (ed.), *Harvard Historical Monographs No. 1* (2d ed., Boston, 1891), 90–93.

[55] Allen Mosher to Cleveland, July 6, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; E. R. White to Springer, July 8, 1886, *ibid.;* E. Saint to Cleveland, July 15, 1886, *ibid.;* E. J. Blandin to *id.,* July 17, 1886, *ibid.;* J. B. Merriman to *id.,* July 27, 1886, *ibid.;*

Less encouraging were reports of the profits Republicans were reaping from the vetoes in the 1886 state campaign. Senator Harrison added them to Democratic soldiers' dismissals, making a grand total for the eyes of Indiana veterans. In his speeches he placed equal emphasis on dismissals and vetoes. Quoting Cleveland's comment that he was tired of disapproving grants to those who had no right to them, the general remarked that the soldiers also had known fatigue: "I have seen some of you, after a day's march and a day's fighting, digging trenches . . . , when the morning dawned drop asleep on the side of the ditch. . . ." A Michigan Democrat complained that the vetoes "knocked the Democratic party out of our County Senatorial Congressional and also State Victory," while Commissioner Black informed Cleveland that throughout the country the burden of Republican speeches and newspaper propaganda was the administration's unfriendliness to the pension system. The defeat of several Democratic congressmen who had opposed general pension legislation was attributed to Republican work among the veterans.[56]

Perhaps it was these reports that led Cleveland to explain his position at length in his December message to Congress. Resort to that body for reversal of the Pension Bureau's "deliberate and careful" decisions, he complained, was opening the door to claims which were devoid of merit "but so surrounded by patriotic feeling that they are hard to resist." Acceptance of these fraudulent cases was unfair to the "brave and crippled but poor and friendless soldier." Cleveland admitted that "every patriotic heart" must be moved by the thought of the destitute veteran whose dependence resulted not from service injuries, but from advancing age, sickness, or misfortune. But if these men were to be relieved, it should be done "under the sanction of a law, not in

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Col. Thomas Moonlight to *id.*, September 23, 1886, *ibid.;* Jesse Rhodes to *id.*, August 6, 1886, *ibid.;* John A. Copeland to *id.*, November 20, 1886, *ibid.;* Mortimer C. Earl to Lamont, June 29, 1886, *ibid.*

[56] Scrap Book II, Harrison MSS.; Harrison to John W. Jones, July 29, 1886, Tibbott Transcripts, *ibid.;* *id.* to John K. Gowdy, July 19, 1886, *ibid.;* *id.* to D. M. Hayes, November 8, 1886, *ibid.;* Edward W. Stephenson to Cleveland, November 3, 1886, Cleveland MSS.; Jefferson Armstrong to *id.*, July 9, 1886, *ibid.;* John C. Black to *id.*, November 27, 1886, *ibid.;* Benton Harris Wilcox, "The Grand Army of the Republic" (M. A. thesis, University of Nebraska, 1930), Chap. VI; Nevins, *Cleveland,* 330.

evasion of it." He therefore recommended adoption of a comprehensive system covering "every contingency," and rendering "unnecessary an objectionable volume of special legislation." In conclusion Cleveland aimed a barb at Republicans in his expression of confidence that the former soldiers could not be "swerved from the duty of citizenship by artful appeals to their spirit of brotherhood born of common peril and suffering," nor would they exact as proof of devotion to their welfare "a willingness to neglect public duty in their behalf." [57]

The *National Tribune* termed Cleveland's recommendation for broader legislation "a long rail to mend a bad breach in his political fences." But the President soon revealed that he had no intention of bowing to the persistent seekers after soldiers' votes. The agitation of the latter, combined with the clamor of the pension agents, the *National Tribune*, and the G.A.R. pension committee, was finally producing results, although the motives of all were well aired in Congress as well as in the press. One congressman complained that too many members were using the question as "a powerful lever" to "secure a succession to their seats on the floor." Another pointed out that the driving force behind the measure was not the desire to give justice to deserving veterans but to gather "the soldiers' votes, and to pay the money of the tax payers of the country as the price of political supremacy. . . . We proceed here as if there were a great fund of money collected together and we are engaged in its distribution. But . . . we may reach the point at which the public judgment will revolt against this outrage of giving the public money for political supremacy, of taxing the people's sweat and toil and giving away their money in this manner." But congressmen who were thinking of re-election campaign speeches were not to be influenced by these considerations. The determined opposition of the administration and a large portion of the press proved unavailing to prevent the passage of an act granting twelve dollars monthly to all veterans of at least ninety days' service who were dependent upon their own efforts for livelihood and who claimed inability to work.[58]

[57] Second Annual Message, December 6, 1886, in Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 523–25.

[58] Washington *National Tribune*, December 9, 1886; *Cong. Record*, 48 Cong., 2 Sess., January 6, 1865, p. 486; *ibid.*, 49 Cong., 1 Sess., January 20, 1886, p. 788;

Cleveland promptly vetoed this bill, which changed the basis for pensions from service disabilities to any disabilities regardless of origin. Insisting that the act did not meet the spirit of his recommendation, he pointed out that it was uncertain in language and liable to conflicting interpretations. Moreover, since it established no grading system, any inability to earn subsistence would entitle applicants to the full pension. This, said the President, would produce an appalling increase in government expenditures. Never before in the nation's history, he pointed out, had it been proposed to grant government aid "based upon a military service so recent, and where age and circumstances appeared so little to demand such aid." He could not believe that the "vast peaceful army" of veterans wished to be confounded with those who were "willing to be objects of simple charity." Should such a bill become a law, the race for pensions would not only "stimulate weakness and pretended incapacity for labor, but put a further premium on dishonesty and mendacity." [59]

The Democratic press enthusiastically applauded the President's decision, as did also many Republican papers, especially those that advocated tariff reduction. The Chicago *Tribune* hailed his courage in defying "the demagogues in Congress." Washington's shrewdest claim agents, it asserted, could not have devised a bill which, by "pensioning all on the plea of poverty without regard to cause," was better calculated to loot the Treasury. Many veterans, too, expressed approval.[60]

Seeing an opportunity to arouse the G.A.R. against Cleveland, Commander in Chief Fairchild immediately urged posts to inform congressmen of their "approval or disapproval of the principles involved in the vetoed bill." The New York *Tribune* sent a circular letter to posts requesting their views, but the society's

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ibid., 49 Cong., 1 Sess., January 21, 1886, p. 825; *ibid.*, 49 Cong. 1 Sess., February 25, 1886, p. 1797; Black to Samuel J. Randall, January 25, 1886, in New York *Herald*, January 27, 1886.

[59] Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 549–57; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 204–12.

[60] Chicago *Tribune*, February 13, 1887; St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, February 13, 1887; *Public Opinion*, II, 395; Sickles to Cleveland, February 18, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; James W. Catts to *id.*, January 21, 1887, *ibid.;* A. W. Bishop to *id.*, February 7, 1887, *ibid.;* Charles Oliver to *id.*, February 14, 1887, *ibid.;* J. P. Foster to Lamont, February 11, 1887, *ibid.;* W. W. Wright to *id.*, February 15, 1887, *ibid.*

executive committee apparently feared that their replies might reveal lack of unity. It promptly decreed that posts express opinions only through official G.A.R. channels. The organization's pension committee urged members to respond to Fairchild's circular with sharp protests against the veto, and the *National Tribune* echoed these efforts to arouse the ire of veterans.[61]

In response to Fairchild's circular, G.A.R. posts and department encampments flooded Congress with demands that the bill be passed over Cleveland's veto. The *National Tribune* proudly announced, "A very large portion of the *Congressional Record* each day is taken up by announcement of petitions from Posts and other soldier organizations. . . . There has never been a more unanimous and earnest expression of sentiment by the Order at large. . . ." A Democratic veteran wrote regarding the Nebraska Department's resolutions, "The . . . encampment . . . was composed of 306 delegates, all Republicans except less than half a dozen, and was controlled by the republican politicians of the Grand Army." The Commander in Chief, accused by the Democratic press of dictating opinions to the organization, explained that he had merely requested posts to express a view, whatever it might be. His implication, however, was obvious. And few members were unwilling to submit to the leadership of Fairchild, Lemon, and the G.A.R. pension committee; only an occasional post defeated resolutions denouncing the veto. Other veterans' groups were equally outspoken. Chicago's Union Veteran Club, for example, asserted that "it would not hurt the government to help a few rascals if it thereby helped hundreds of its needy defenders." [62]

On February 19, 1887, champion of soldiers C. C. Matson pre-

[61] "Circular No. 4," Madison, Wis., February 14, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; "General Orders No. 13," Madison, Wis., April 25, 1887, *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 306; *Proceedings 22nd Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 4," April 16, 1887, p. 128; M. Griffin to Fairchild, April 15, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; William McClelland to Lamont, April 21, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; New York *Tribune*, April 24, May 3, 1887; *Proceedings 21st Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 92, 93, 102; George S. Merrill to the Comrades of the Grand Army, Washington *National Tribune*, February 24, 1887.

[62] *Proceedings 20th Encampment California G.A.R.*, 1887, p. 101; *Proceedings 21st Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, February 15, 16, 1887, pp. 89–93, 102; W. S. Shoemaker to Cleveland, March 22, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; Philo H. Bachus to Lamont, February 22, 1887, *ibid.;* J. P. Foster to *id.*, February 11, 1887, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune*, February 15, 1887.

sented his committee's recommendation that the House pass the pension bill over the President's veto. A. J. Warner of Ohio and Edward S. Bragg of Wisconsin, both veterans, objected that the agitation for the bill had been worked up by claim agents who dominated Grand Army policy. In a renewed attack on Cleveland, Republicans pointed out that he had approved the Mexican War Pension Bill, from which southerners would derive two-thirds of the benefits. Administration pressure forced enough northern Democrats into opposition to block passage of the bill, although many of them were torn between party loyalty and fear of the veterans' retaliation. The size of the vote—175 for and 125 against—indicated that members considered the measure one of the session's most important measures. The veterans' friends could boast only one success: passage of an act increasing grants to widows, minors, and dependent relatives from eight to twelve dollars monthly.[63]

If Republicans failed to rally the necessary two-thirds majority to pass the pension bill, their real purpose—to identify their own party with the cause of veterans' interests—was well on the way to accomplishment. Grand Army members in particular were becoming convinced that the Democratic party would oppose further concessions to Union soldiers because of a desire to show favor to the South. One Democrat wrote that this propaganda was "a substitute for the worn out 'Bloody Shirt' . . . to hold every soldier and colored man in the . . . Republican Camp." [64]

In succeeding months Cleveland made a series of blunders that enabled Republicans to identify him even more closely with the Lost Cause. Early in 1887 St. Louis began extensive preparations for the national Grand Army encampment scheduled to meet there in September. The local arrangements committee accepted the suggestion of Ransom Post's commander that they invite Cleveland to be the city's guest during the encampment. The post immediately requested the President's permission to act as his "guard of honor" on the occasion. The St. Louis *Post Dis-*

[63] *Cong. Record,* 49 Cong., 1 Sess., February 24, 1887, pp. 2213, 2218; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 131–45, 147–49; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions,* 213–17; *id., History of Military Pension Legislation in U.S.,* 105; Washington *National Tribune,* March 3, 10, 17, 28, May 5, 12, 19, 1887.

[64] E. P. T. Hammond to Cleveland, January 21, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

patch, building up enthusiasm for the proposed visit, urged that a "monster" citizens' invitation be formed. This was done, and Mayor David R. Francis appointed a committee to convey the invitation to Washington.[65]

The President, who the previous year had accepted an invitation to review the Grand Army's Decoration Day parade and attend its evening services in New York, saw nothing amiss in this suggestion. At the close of March his secretary informed the mayor that Cleveland hoped to attend the encampment; later he sent a definite acceptance. Undoubtedly political motives underlay both the invitation and its favorable reception. The Democratic majority of the arrangements committee, composed of eight Grand Army officers, five former Confederates, and five civilians, must have realized the advantage of presenting the next Democratic presidential candidate as guest of the powerful organization from which Republicans derived so much advantage. One Democrat assured Cleveland that his visit would "make a million friends in the west and 150,000 votes." Expensive preparations for a fair to be held in October was an additional incentive. General Sherman, a member of Ransom Post, told his brother, "The real motive for inviting the President was to economize the illumination which is the handsomest I have ever seen at home or abroad. . . ." [66]

Cleveland also had an eye on the presidential campaign when he accepted the invitation. Apparently he believed that veterans would regard his visit as a friendly gesture and that his appearance might even neutralize the effect of his pension vetoes. Moreover he appreciated the desirability of showing himself to westerners. When Mayor Francis visited Washington as head of a formal invitation committee, the President's secretary announced that

[65] A. G. Peterson to Cleveland, March 22, 1887, *ibid.*; *id.* to Lamont, June 11, 1887, *ibid.*; *id.* to Cleveland, May 25, 1887, *ibid.*

[66] M. T. McMahon to Cleveland, March 28, 1885, Cleveland MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, May 19, 1885, *ibid.*; Bennett W. Ellison to Lamont, January 21, 1886, *ibid.*; W. A. Copp to *id.*, May 8, 1886, *ibid.*; John E. De Witt to Cleveland, April 15, 1885, *ibid.*; Peterson to Lamont, June 11, 1887, *ibid.*; Frank A. Vickey to Cleveland, April 29, 1887, *ibid.*; McClelland to Lamont, April 21, 1887, *ibid.*; Walter B. Stevens, "When Cleveland Came to St. Louis," in *Missouri Historical Review* (Columbia, 1906–), XXI (1926–27), 145–47; W. T. Sherman to his brother, July 23, 1887, W. T. Sherman MSS.

the President desired a public rather than a private reception in order that everyone might shake hands with him.[67]

Republican Grand Army leaders immediately perceived the political aspects of Cleveland's proposed visit. George S. Merrill, chairman of the society's pension committee, wrote to Commander Fairchild that Cleveland's presence would "result in the public impression that the G.A.R. were giving him a great ovation." He continued, "The situation is full of peril; the . . . proposition is a canny democratic scheme to entangle us." Merrill reported that Grand Army leaders in Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C., were also disturbed.[68]

Immediately the *National Tribune* began a campaign to arouse members against the proposed visit. Lemon claimed that he voiced "the almost unanimous wish of the G.A.R." in hoping that the efforts of "certain politicians" to bring Cleveland to the encampment would fail. "We do not yearn to kiss the hand that smote us," he proclaimed. Moreover, St. Louis should not expect the encampment, which had never before had any "counter-attractions or side-shows," to share honors with another celebration. Early in June he inquired, "Does anyone want the National Encampment running in conjunction with a grand political mass meeting?" [69]

This agitation had its effect, and scattered protests from G.A.R. posts frightened Ransom Post into withdrawing its offer to act as Cleveland's "guard of honor." But the storm did not actually break until General J. M. Tuttle, Iowa Department commander, visited St. Louis and found that Democratic organizations were planning demonstrations for the President. Tuttle informed the arrangements committee that it had involved itself in a "pretty scrape" and announced that should the President come, two-thirds of the Iowa posts would stay away. "The Grand Army doesn't propose to lend itself to any political scheme and they won't boom Cleveland," he declared. "They will insult and snub him if they come here. . . ." General John W. Noble replied that since the committee had raised a hundred thousand dollars

[67] Stevens, "When Cleveland Came to St. Louis," *loc. cit.*, 147.
[68] Merrill to Fairchild, May 3, 1887, Fairchild MSS.
[69] Washington *National Tribune*, May 5, 12, 19, 26, June 2, 1887.

in one day for the delegates' entertainment, they could scarcely afford to be rude. But Tuttle was not to be silenced. "We have faced the Democracy before in solid ranks when they were behind guns," he cried for the benefit of newspaper correspondents, "and we can face them now, when they attempt to subvert the purposes of our organization." Nebraska's commander, also visiting in St. Louis, seconded these views. He proclaimed that in his department, Democratic as well as Republican members hated Cleveland for his pension bill veto and would "most emphatically decline to do him honor." [70]

These scathing comments, piled upon the *National Tribune*'s denunciation, so aroused members that the St. Louis arrangements committee received hundreds of letters from posts threatening cancellation of reservations. Iowa posts endorsed Tuttle's remarks, while many posts in other states passed resolutions warning that if Cleveland attended the reunion, he would be insulted.[71]

As "Old Tut's" angry remarks awakened the press to the political aspects of the situation, a flood of editorials appeared tearing the issue to pieces. Democratic papers, unanimously defending Cleveland's motives, asserted that it was Tuttle who made the question political. Many Republican papers defended the general and accused Democrats of trying to boom Cleveland through the G.A.R., a spotlessly nonpartisan organization. The Chicago *Tribune* recalled that when a local committee had asked Blaine to attend the encampment two years previously, Grand Army officers withdrew the invitation because of his prominence as a Republican. But other Republican journals deplored the rashness of the extremists who were threatening Cleveland with insult. While this battle waged in the general press, the *National Tribune* continued to rail against the President.[72]

[70] Peterson to Cleveland, May 31, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; New York *Tribune*, June 3, 4, 1887; Chicago *Tribune*, June 3, 1887; Noble to Sherman, June 6, 1887, W. T. Sherman MSS.; New York *Mail and Express*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 209; Washington *National Tribune*, June 9, 1887.

[71] New York *Tribune*, June 8, 1887; *Public Opinion*, III, 209; clipping enclosed in Wilson W. Fay to Cleveland, June 13, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

[72] *Public Opinion*, III, 209–12; Chicago *Tribune*, June 13, 1887; New York *Mail and Express* and Boston *Journal*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 209–10; Chicago *Tribune*, June 14, 16, 1887; Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 210; Washington *National Tribune*, June 9, 1887.

In St. Louis an argument developed over the question of whether the invitation could be considered as emanating from the Grand Army. Several G.A.R. officers had sat on the committee that first invited Cleveland, but their action was never officially endorsed. Nevertheless, some committee members insisted that the G.A.R. had invited Cleveland. When the pressure of the posts' condemnation became too heavy to bear, the chairman announced that the President had not accepted the committee's invitation but that of St. Louis citizens, whose guest he would become. At this point Commander in Chief Fairchild entered the controversy with the announcement that he had no official knowledge of Cleveland's decision to attend; moreover, since the city's accommodations would be taxed to care for the soldiers, he did not believe St. Louis would be so inhospitable to them as to invite the President also.[73]

Conservative Grand Army leaders, disturbed over the possible public reaction to the invectives of Tuttle and his hotheaded cohorts, sought oil for the troubled waters. A member of the St. Louis arrangements committee asked General Sherman to write a letter for publication that "would set at rest this seeming feeling of discontent." Although Sherman in a private letter bitterly declared that it was "questionable whether Lincoln or Jeff Davis was the Union man," he did believe the lawful President was entitled to respect. Complying with the request, he reminded his comrades that Cleveland was President by a fair election and was free to come and go "wherever the jurisdiction of the national government extends." The idea of insulting him at St. Louis was monstrous. The pension question should never have entered the encampment controversy. The general regretted Cleveland's vetoes but believed veterans should submit to his judgment because it was the law. Tuttle disgustedly accused Sherman of "virtually approving the Democratic scheme to have President Clevelands [*sic*] pension vetoes approved by the G.A.R. for the purpose of increasing his chances of election." But Sherman's letter received wide publicity and won approval from many Republican papers.[74]

[73] J. M. Tuttle to Sherman, June 13, 1887, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, June 9, 1887.

[74] D. P. Dyer to Sherman, June 6, 1887, W. T. Sherman MSS.; W. T. Sherman

Another member of the arrangements committee also sought a solution. Commander A. G. Peterson of Ransom Post, oppressed with the responsibility for having proposed the Cleveland invitation, laboriously wrote a twelve-page letter to Lamont suggesting that the President postpone his visit to the first week in October, when he could be guest of honor at the St. Louis fair.[75]

Just as it began to appear that the climax of bitterness had passed, an unfortunate step on Cleveland's part loosed the storm again. In approving an order which he regarded as a friendly gesture indicating absence of sectional animosity, he walked directly into the hands of those Republicans who based their political fortunes on revived sectionalism. These politicians greedily seized the opportunity that the President presented, and again they worked through the agency of the G.A.R.

A number of Confederate flags captured by the Union forces had gathered dust for years with some Union banners in the basement, and later in an attic room, of the War Department building. From time to time various veterans' organizations had requested the return of certain of these flags, and Congress had always authorized their release. In April, 1887, Adjutant General R. C. Drum suggested in a letter to Secretary of War William C. Endicott that "it would be a graceful act to anticipate future requests of this nature." He proposed that the flags be returned to the respective states in which the regiments that bore them had been organized. Drum, a Grand Army member, could scarcely be accused of harboring Confederate sympathies.[76]

Cleveland's approval was given verbally to Endicott, apparently as part of normal routine and without any particular consideration. The President's sanction, however, was in accordance with his refusal to recognize sectional animosity. His party depended upon

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to Gen. John W. Noble and Dyer, June 12, 1887, in New York *Tribune*, June 13, 1887; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, June 26, 1887, in Thorndike (ed.), *Sherman Letters*, 375; Tuttle to Sherman, June 13, 1887, W. T. Sherman MSS.; *Public Opinion*, III, 209–12.

[75] Peterson to Lamont, June 11, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

[76] R. C. Drum to W. C. Endicott, April 30, 1887, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 229; George B. Hibbard to Harrison, December 8, 1888, Harrison MSS.; *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography* (New York, 1898–1949), 34 vols., XII, 359; Edward W. Whitaker to Fairchild, June 18, 1887, Fairchild MSS.

the support of both sections for national success; it was only natural that Cleveland should stress sectional unity while quietly recognizing the claims of the appointment-hungry southern Democrats. In his inaugural address he had expressed the hope that the people would "cheerfully and honestly abandon all sectional prejudice and distrust, and determine, with manly confidence in one another, to work out harmoniously the achievements of our national destiny." From the beginning his whole procedure was based on the assumption that the public attitude would be just that. The blunt manner in which he hewed to this policy—as in his appointment of former Confederates, his refusal to make a speech on his Gettysburg visit, his letter on the unveiling of the Albert Sidney Johnston monument, and his fishing on Memorial Day—did not go unobserved, but the criticism was inconsequential compared with the onslaught that was to come.[77]

Drum tendered the flags to the various state governments in June. When his circular letter came to the attention of General H. V. Boynton, Washington correspondent for the Republican Cincinnati *Commercial Gazette*, the reporter perceived its political potentialities. Immediately he wired his paper an account of what was occurring, with a list of the flags at Washington which Ohio troops had captured. Governor Foraker, facing a re-election campaign, was the first to capitalize on the situation. Pouring his venom on the Democratic administration for this crime, he wired Boynton to begin legal proceedings in the state's name to block the return of Ohio flags. Boynton hired George S. Boutwell and Samuel Shellabarger of Johnson impeachment fame; they hurriedly began to prepare the necessary papers.[78]

Meanwhile the Ohio press blazed with the story, and a disabled captain wired the governor, "The old soldiers of Hillsboro hope you will not give up any captured rebel flags in the State House at Columbus. Intense feeling here among the boys who wore the blue." Foraker's belligerent reply flew back, "No rebel flags will be surrendered while I am Governor." Drum, of course, had not thought of including the banners held by state governments in

[77] Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, VIII, 300; Nevins, *Cleveland*, 322–39.

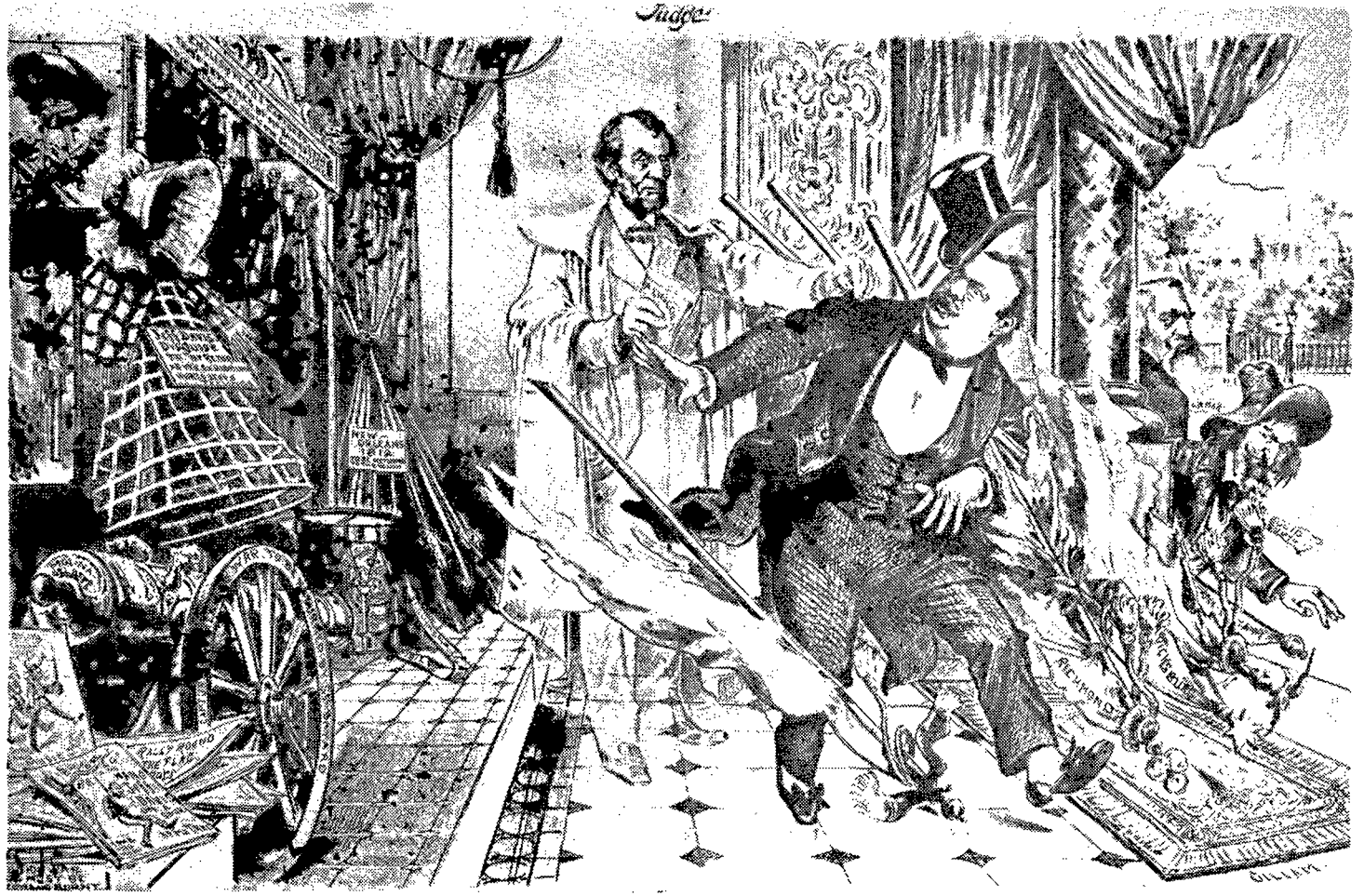
[78] Washington *National Tribune*, June 30, 1887; New York *Tribune*, June 17, 1887.

his order, but the firebrands overlooked this fact. On the same day, amidst a "perfect shower" of angry messages, the governor received a telegram in behalf "of the thirty seven thousand comrades" of the Ohio G.A.R. asking that he "protest emphatically to the authorities at Washington" against returning the flags. Foraker immediately transmitted this message to Cleveland and added his own comment: "The patriotic people of this State are shocked and indignant beyond anything I can express. I earnestly request you to revoke the order that has given such unqualified offense." For so promptly rising to the occasion, the governor earned the title "Fire-Alarm Foraker." [79]

This was but the beginning of the storm. Commander in Chief Fairchild, excitable and impatient by nature, heard the news just before a reception in his honor by a Harlem Grand Army post. Stern and trembling with excitement as he entered the hall, he scarcely awaited the opening formalities before bursting into denunciation of the order: "May God palsy the brain that conceived it, and may God palsy the tongue that dictated it!" With these words Fairchild launched into a bitter speech that whipped the feelings of his audience to a fury. Raising his only hand, he cried, "I appeal to the sentiment of the Nation to prevent this sacrilege." The veterans listened with bated breath and looked at each other with awe. Their commander in chief had "never seen a body of men more excited than were the old soldiers there." Fairchild later confided to his wife that he "fairly trembled with excitement" and his heart was "full." He did not know what he was saying until the words were out. But, he added, "I do not in the least regret it, for the very extravagance of the utterance sent them at once to the furthest corner of our country and called quick attention to the outrage contemplated." Wide publicity the remarks certainly received, and Fairchild took pains to keep them fresh in his comrades' minds. As he continued his tour of Grand Army departments, he loudly inveighed against the "crime." [80]

[79] Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life*, I, 242; Foraker to Cleveland, June 15, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

[80] A. J. Essex to Rev. T. J. Morgan, January 31, 1890, Harrison MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, June 16, 1887; Washington *National Tribune*, June 23, 1887; Fairchild to his wife, June 19, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, June 21, 1887, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, June 28, 1887, *ibid.*; "Reddy" to Fairchild, June 17, 1887, *ibid.*



Judge, XII (July 2, 1887)

HALT!

SPIRIT OF THE WAR FOR THE UNION.—"Had you *fought* for those flags, you would not be so quick to give them away!"

CLEVELAND.—"Great Scott! I thought you were dead and forgotten long ago. I only meant to please Mr. Solid South. They're rubbish anyhow."

As other Grand Army leaders took up the cry, many members were goaded to anger; posts throughout the country held indignation meetings. Governor William Larrabee wired a protest to Cleveland in behalf of the Iowa Grand Army; Governor John M. Thayer sent a similar message for Nebraska's soldiers; and Governor Oglesby wired the Illinois Grand Army's objections. The G.A.R. departments of Colorado, Illinois, Kansas and Vermont dispatched vigorous objections to the President. Indianapolis members, too, sent excited protests. An Ohio comrade, believing that the order applied to the flags held by state governments, "organized a movement to seize the first package of flags and prevent their shipment from the city." Cleveland even received threats of physical violence.[81]

The really vicious comments, reminiscent of the Grand Army's denunciation of Johnson, came from individual posts. One pronounced the order "a Dastard outrage and Disgrace to all Patriotic American citizens." Sam Rice Post, Atlantic, Iowa, sent the most vituperative resolutions; they were written in red letters on blood-red paper and were enclosed in a red envelope tied with crimson ribbon as symbol of "the burning loyalty which resents the sacrilege, and the field of blood from which these flags were snatched in the tumult of war." The South was accomplishing through Cleveland, they proclaimed, what it had failed to do on the field. The President had "forfeited all claim to respect from those who fought to capture these emblems of treason, and from all who respect the valor and sacrifice of the Union soldiers." Posts must intensify their activities as "schools of loyalty, and to sow the seeds of true patriotism, and also of encouraging with all our power and influence the thorough organization of our boys and Sons of Veterans . . . that treason may be promptly rebuked. . . ." The post's committee indignantly asked, "Is this

[81] Oglesby to Cleveland, June 15, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; William Larrabee to *id.*, June 15, 1887, *ibid.;* John M. Thayer to *id.*, June 16, 1887, *ibid.;* Rusk to *id.*, June 16, 1887, *ibid.;* A. C. Sweetzer, Commander, Illinois G.A.R., to Cleveland, June 16, 1887, *ibid.;* Alva Adams to *id.*, June 17, 1887, *ibid.;* T. H. Doward to *id.*, June 17, 1887, *ibid.;* Commander, Vermont G.A.R., to *id.*, June 17, 1887, *ibid.;* General Joseph R. Hawley to *id.*, June 16, 1887, *ibid.;* anonymous to *id.*, June 19, 1887, *ibid.;* *Nation,* XLIV (June 23, 1887), 519; Chicago *Tribune,* June 17, 1887; Edward W. Whitaker to Fairchild, June 18, 1887, Fairchild MSS.

intended as an official recognition of the Confederacy' [*sic*] if not of its success, yet of its justification?" [82]

Again the *National Tribune* blazed forth with insulting epithets, and the Republican press furiously shook the bloody shirt in the administration's face. The proposed step amounted to an admission that both sides were right; it would inevitably lead to propositions for paying the Confederate debt and pensioning former Confederates. Here was but one of many proofs that Cleveland hated the Union's saviors—had he not deliberately insulted them by going fishing on Memorial Day? The journals widely publicized an appeal to a New York post from Cleveland's army substitute, who by a curious coincidence chose this moment to complain that the President's refusal to support his pension claim had forced him into a soldiers' home.[83]

Alarmed Democrats, believing the order a serious blunder, grew frantic lest the general public as well as the veterans turn against the administration. Commissioner Black wired Cleveland from Ohio that the proposal had "provoked deep feeling. . . . Mischievous men are taken [*sic*] Extreme advantage of the situation. The public mind seems unprepared for the sentiment of such a course." H. A. Hurlbut, the Grand Army's first elected commander in chief, wrote to Lamont, "Anything the President may do indicative of a feeling to fraternize the North and South will be used politically by these fanatics to prejudice the people—I wish the persons near him who are constantly working up these questions would stop the business. It does no good and will do harm. The rapidly increasing commercial relations between the North and South will settle all this question of fraternal feeling—If let alone in other ways." [84]

But Cleveland did not need persuasion that the whole thing

[82] Resolutions of Post No. 480, Ohio G.A.R., Bloomington, Ohio, June 16, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; complaints from other posts, June 16–25, 1887, *ibid.;* J. A. Martin and H. G. Curtis to Cleveland, June 24, 1887, *ibid.;* resolutions of Sam Rice Post, Iowa G.A.R., Atlantic, Iowa, undated, to *id.*, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune,* June 23, 1887.

[83] Chicago *Tribune,* June 16, 17, 18, July 2, 9, 11, 1887; George Brinske to Commander, Crocker Post, Des Moines, Iowa, June 17, 1887, *ibid.,* July 2, 1887; New York *Tribune,* June 14, July 3, 1887.

[84] Black to Cleveland, June 16, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; *id.* to *id.,* June 17, 1887, *ibid.;* Hurlbut to Lamont, June 17, 1887, *ibid.;* Black to Cleveland, June 19, 1887, *ibid.*

was a mistake; even while Foraker was wiring his belligerent messages and Fairchild delivering his "palsy" speech, the President sat down to compose a letter recalling the order. The numerous crossed-out words and other changes indicate the importance which he attached to the matter. The following day the finished copy was dispatched to the secretary of war. Cleveland stated that more careful consideration had led him to the conclusion that "the return of these flags in the manner thus contemplated is not authorized by existing law nor justified as an Executive act. . . . Any direction as to the final disposition of them should originate with Congress." Democratic papers rallied to the President's support, while the unappeased Republican press boasted that he had been forced to "back down." Foraker remarked scornfully that he "quailed like a whipped spaniel." [85]

Democrats and Independents tried to check the continued Republican offensive with a counterattack. General John Newton told a Fordham graduating class that an organization like the Grand Army, operating under directions from a political party, was incompatible with "the free working of our system of government" and should be disbanded. Administration supporters on the Battle of Gettysburg anniversary committee—among them General Sickles, Fitz-John Porter, Slocum, and Schurz—decided to rebuke the extremists by providing an example of sectional friendliness. They accordingly invited the Army of Northern Virginia to join in the celebration. Cleveland received an invitation, and in declining it he struck back at his detractors. "While those who fought and who have so much to forgive lead in the pleasant ways of peace," he wrote, "how wicked appear the traffic in Sectional hate, and the betrayal of patriotic sentiment." The Republican papers pounced upon this, proclaiming it a "taunt" at "every man who fought against treason." [86]

[85] Original draft of letter in Cleveland's handwriting, dated June 15, 1887, *ibid.;* Cleveland to the Secretary of War, June 16, 1887, *ibid.;* Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic,* 143; *Public Opinion,* III, 229, 232, 235, 269–71; Chicago *Tribune,* June 17, 1887; New York *Tribune,* June 17, 1887; *Harper's Weekly,* XXXI (October 1, 1887), 702; Joseph B. Foraker, *Speeches of Joseph B. Foraker, 1869–1917* (published at various places and bound, 1869–1917), 7 vols., I, 98, 129.

[86] New York *Daily Graphic,* June 28, 1887; Cleveland to John W. Frazier, June 24, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; *Nation,* XLIV (June 23, 1887), 519; Chicago *Tribune,* July 4, 1887.

Under the stimulus of continued invective from Fairchild, Foraker, and John Sherman, the Republican element in the Grand Army grew steadily more vituperative against the President. Gone now was the friendliness with which members had accepted Fairchild's gesture at the time of the Charleston earthquake; many of their resolutions indicated that ire over the pension vetoes had made them more willing tools of their officers. Hostility to Cleveland's proposed attendance at the encampment became increasingly violent, and Mayor Francis hurried to Washington for a consultation. After his return to St. Louis, he informed Cleveland that although resident Grand Army men disclaimed any antipathy to his presence they feared it would prompt many to stay away. Francis reported a "growing sentiment" that the President postpone his visit; but he added: ". . . before you change your plans I want to see the G.A.R. take some definite stand in regard to your invitation and visit which will put them at a disadvantage and strengthen you." [87]

But the Grand Army took no official stand, while the posts' warnings of insult continued. On July 4, Cleveland officially withdrew his acceptance of the invitation: "The threats of personal violence and harm in case I undertake the trip in question, which scores of misguided, unbalanced men under the stimulation of excited feeling have made, are not even considered . . . but I must bear with me the people's highest office, the dignity of which I must protect." Francis immediately published the letter, and joyfully wired Cleveland's secretary, "It puts the Grand Army at a great disadvantage, is the entering wedge in the disruption of that organization and leaves the president master of the situation." While Democratic journals praised the letter and the Republican press treated it with sarcasm, one independent paper commented: ". . . the President seems to have the best of the controversy. . . . our Grand Army friends have subjected themselves to a stinging rebuke and put themselves on the defensive." [88]

[87] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 169; anonymous to Fairchild, June, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; David R. Francis to Cleveland, June 22, 1887, Cleveland MSS.

[88] Cleveland to Francis, July 4, 1887, in *Public Opinion*, III, 290; Cleveland to Frank Gaiennie, July 4, 1887, *ibid.*; *id.* to John W. Noble, July 4, 1887, *ibid.*; Chicago *Tribune*, July 2, 1887; New York *Tribune*, July 3, 11, 1887; Francis to

Immediately Mayor Francis called his citizens' committee and suggested that Cleveland be invited to visit St. Louis after the G.A.R.'s departure. Then he arranged a mass meeting, at which the proposal was enthusiastically accepted. Once more the mayor led a delegation to Washington, and the President consented to be the city's guest during the October fair. Meanwhile the St. Louis arrangements committee requested Fairchild to publicize the fact that no political organizations had been invited to join the Grand Army parade.[89]

But the agitators continued to shout. Tuttle still urgently demanded that the encampment be moved to another city, while the fiery words of several prominent politicians indicated that they had tied their fortunes to the tail of the bloody shirt. John Sherman used the issue to heighten his prospects for the presidential nomination; Fairchild rejoiced over assurances that his role in the flag affair made him a formidable contender for a place on the Republican ticket. The New York *Sun* commented that there was obviously a "great deal left" in the sectional issue when the "right voice" sounded the call. And the fact that Fairchild could sound that chord gave him an excellent chance for the presidential nomination.[90]

But it was "Fire-Alarm Joe" who made the greatest bluster, and it was he who wrung the greatest advantage from the situation. The most prominent item in the political literature of Ohio's gubernatorial campaign that summer was the reprint of the old captain's telegraphed query and Foraker's bellicose reply that Ohio flags would not be surrendered. The dispatch appeared on badges carrying the governor's picture. Foraker concluded his *Forum* article on the issues between the two parties with an at-

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Cleveland, July 7, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; Washington *Critic*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 290.

[89] Stevens, "When Cleveland Came to St. Louis," *loc. cit.*, 151–52; Francis to Cleveland, July 7, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; *id.* to Lamont, July 8, 1887, *ibid.*; New York *Tribune*, July 9, 1887; *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 15," Madison, Wis., July 11, 1887, pp. 313–14.

[90] Tuttle to Fairchild, July 11, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; A. J. Sampson to *id.*, June 20, 1887, *ibid.*; J. K. Proudfit to *id.*, August 13, 1887, *ibid.*; clipping among letters dated August 9, 1887, *ibid.*; *Public Opinion*, III, 238; John Sherman, *Recollections of Forty Years*, II, 985–87.

tempt to prove that Cleveland's acts revealed a scheme to give the South dominance over the North. Republicans must be restored to power, he insisted, "to check the revival of the Southern Confederacy." [91]

The governor's campaign speeches, frequently descending to the level of personal abuse, were almost entirely on the subject of Cleveland's "insults" to the "brave battle-scarred veterans." Particularly virulent was his denunciation of the President's conduct on the Grand Army's "beautiful, sacred, and holy" day: "A little thing, is it, for the President of the United States to go fishing on Decoration Day? No, it is not a little thing. (Applause) It is a shameful disgrace that cannot be excused, even to one who hired a substitute; and just so surely as he is renominated in 1888 he will learn the truth of what I say." Foraker's re-election intensified his hope of replacing Sherman as Ohio's favorite son in the Republican nominating convention.[92]

By midsummer it seemed clear that Cleveland had inadvertently provided the issue for the next presidential campaign. If *Public Opinion* may be regarded as a reliable reflection of the average American's interests, the invitation and flag episodes were by far the most widely discussed subjects in the country. Entering office with the firm intention of disregarding further nonsense over prejudices that should have been buried long since, the President had succeeded only in emphasizing the sectional aspect of both major parties. Certainly the furor over the St. Louis invitation and the flag order had closed the southern ranks behind the Democratic banner. The Atlanta *Constitution* warned, "The bloody-shirt shriekers have put the South on notice that the next campaign is to be fought on sectional issues. . . . The South cannot afford . . . to present a broken front." The Louisville *Courier-Journal* expressed confidence that the flag episode would "make every doubtful Southern State solid for Cleveland in 1888." [93]

And in the North the veterans' agitation over the invitation and flag incidents had focused public attention upon sectional

[91] Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life,* I, 242; Foraker, *I Would Live It Again,* 102; Joseph B. Foraker, "The Return of the Republican Party," *Forum* (New York, 1886–), III (1887), 556–58.

[92] Foraker, *Speeches,* I, 98, 129, 132–38.

[93] Louisville *Courier-Journal,* quoted in *Public Opinion,* III, 255, 260.

issues. Democrats and Independents, hoping to minimize public reaction, insisted that only a few professional politicians were excited, but their claims were belied by the preoccupation of the press with the subject as well as by the President's correspondence. The letters addressed to him on the money, tariff, agriculture, and labor questions during these months were overwhelmed by the flock of messages pouring in on pensions, the Grand Army, and the flag episode. One independent journal regretfully commented: ". . . that incident cannot be whistled down the wind, as we notice a strong attempt on the part of the Mugwump papers to do." [94]

To many Republicans, indeed, the issue for the presidential campaign seemed hand-picked. W. T. Sherman wrote, "The candidate should be some good Union Soldier who fought the four years of the War, and the simple issue should be was that war right or wrong." James Tanner declared, "We are political fools if we do not take advantage of this patriotic revival." A rumor was current in the press that the Republican national committee had bought two hundred thousand copies of the South-hating *National Tribune* for campaign distribution. The stage was set for a redramatization of the sectional feud.[95]

[94] Savannah *News,* Washington *Post,* Springfield (Mass.) *Republican,* Indianapolis *News,* Boston *Globe, Harper's Weekly,* and Detroit *Free Press,* quoted in *Public Opinion,* III, 230–32, 243, 255, 269.

[95] W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, June 26, 1887, W. T. Sherman MSS.; *id.* to *id.,* November 10, 1887, *ibid.;* circular letter, Tanner to Fairchild, August 15, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; Washington *National Tribune,* July 28, 1887.

Chapter Ten

In Clover

The country was still agitated over the battle-flag order and delighted politicians were outlining plans to fight the presidential campaign on revived war issues when fresh political winds threatened to tear the bloody shirt from the Republican masthead. While businessmen were estimating the damage to their interests caused by renewed sectional animosity, important leaders began to doubt the wisdom of playing up the question by exciting the veterans. Walter Gresham wrote to W. E. Chandler: ". . . you are certainly mistaken when you say 'Cleveland will not get any soldier votes'—soldiers who have been voting the Democratic ticket since the war, are not going to leave the party on account of that flag episode." [1]

Mark Hanna, who was grooming John Sherman for first place on the Republican ticket, observed with dismay the results of the flag controversy upon his protégé's fortunes. Sherman had waved the bloody shirt vigorously, but the situation was better suited to the more dramatic personalities of Foraker and Fairchild. As they took the limelight Sherman slipped into the background, and Hanna resentfully informed Foraker that his spectacular flag pose was "stale" and might injure Sherman's candidacy.[2]

Equally important in the decision to furl the bloody shirt was the reaction within the Grand Army, for two years the activating agency of sectional irritations. Cleveland's cancellation of his encampment plans produced an immediate revulsion. A delegate

[1] "One of the People" to Cleveland, July 8, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; Walter Gresham to Chandler, July 21, 1887, W. E. Chandler MSS.; New York *Times*, August 28, 1887.

[2] John Sherman, *Recollections of Forty Years*, II, 985–87; *Public Opinion*, III, 239; New York *Sun* and Pittsburgh *Press*, quoted *ibid.*, 238, 432; Thomas Beer, *Hanna* (New York, 1929), 112.

wrote: ". . . we, not the President, will be loser." If Cleveland's flag order had caused the bulk of his correspondence during the subsequent two weeks to consist of denunciatory expressions, his July 4 letter was equally effective. But this time the soldiers' letters proclaimed disdain for the extremists. It was Tuttle now who received threats of violence. Members who had not been completely hypnotized by Fairchild, Foraker, and Tuttle were jolted into a realization that their organization was offering insult to the national executive. A typical comment was that of the veteran who assured Cleveland that he need not be alarmed by Fairchild's plea to heaven: "I am almost as wicked as he is probably—and my prayer is directly the opposite. . . ." A prominent Iowa member assured Cleveland that thousands of Grand Army men from the state would be on hand at St. Louis to welcome the President and "place the seal of condemnation on Tuttle." [3]

Some post resolutions expressed similar views. An Indiana post declared that the extremists who had driven the President to withdraw his acceptance were "guilty of disloyalty, and . . . as reprehensible as were those who endeavored to prevent President-elect Lincoln from passing through Baltimore on his way to Washington for inauguration in 1861." A Massachusetts post, visiting Washington after a tour of Virginia battlefields, read a newspaper statement that they would not visit the President because they could "see enough rebels South." Immediately the post, 150 strong, requested an audience; after their visit they formed outside the White House to give Cleveland the marching salute. The President assured the veterans that he had "lost no confidence in the Grand Army of the Republic as an organization notwithstanding recent occurrences. . . . It is incomprehensible to me that those who have risked their lives to save the government should return home to abate one jot or tittle of the respect and support which every good citizen owes to the government and the constituted authorities." [4]

[3] New York *Daily Graphic,* June 28, 1887; Tuttle to Fairchild, July 11, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; McClelland to Lamont, July 8, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; Charles G. Lewis to Cleveland, July 8, 1887, *ibid.;* Thomas H. Lea to *id.,* June 15, 1887, *ibid.*

[4] Resolution of Harrow Post, Mount Vernon, Ind., in *Nation,* XLV, 61; notes in Cleveland's handwriting, July, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; New York *Herald,* July 8, 1887; New York *Tribune,* July 10, 1887.

By July many Democratic members, at first too stunned to repudiate the extravagant expressions of Republican leaders, were springing to Cleveland's defense and threatening to resign. An Iowa observer reported that a number of posts had already divided over Tuttle's pronouncements. The agitation of Fairchild and Tuttle did draw some Democratic veterans from their party, but a larger number began to discuss a rival association that would rally veterans to Cleveland's support. The grumbling materialized into a movement when an Iowa meeting of the National Veteran Association, composed partly of G.A.R. members, not only denounced Tuttle and the Iowa Grand Army but planned a new society. General Rosecrans, who presented this assembly's resolutions to Cleveland, voiced his conviction that they expressed the view of the "vast majority" of Grand Army members "as to the impropriety of denouncing" the chief magistrate "for doing what he believes to be his official duty." But many Democrats considered it politically more expedient to fight the extremists from within the organization; these members planned to challenge Republican allegations at post and department gatherings.[5]

The revulsion of many members coincided with a general public reaction against the Grand Army, a development for which Democratic and "Mugwump" accusations were largely responsible. The Democratic press overflowed with charges that the society was a Republican agency. One paper declared: ". . . it is obvious that control is rapidly passing to men determined to convert it into a machine to fill the pockets of pension agents, to obtain political offices, and to promote the interests of the Republican party." Another, asserting that the Grand Army was preaching sectionalism in order to bring Republicans back to power, announced, "It believes in nothing and nobody but itself and its pensions and the party whose servant it is. It is the greatest combination of arro-

[5] J. M. Estes to Lamont, August 5, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; F. O. Whitman to Cleveland, June 20, 1887, *ibid.;* Joseph L. Smith to *id.*, July 8, 1887, *ibid.;* Edgar F. Vaughn to *id.*, June 27, 1887, *ibid.;* Hugh McFadden to *id.*, July 22, 1887, *ibid.;* W. S. Shoemaker to Cleveland, with enclosed newspaper clippings, March 22, 1887, *ibid.;* Charles Whitehead to Rosecrans, July 22, 1887, *ibid.;* Rosecrans to Cleveland, July 22, 1887, *ibid.;* resolution of National Veterans Association, Des Moines, Iowa, July 15, 1887, *ibid.;* Rosecrans to Lamont, July 28, 1887, *ibid.;* clipping from Des Moines *Leader*, July 16, 1887, *ibid.;* Lea to Lamont, August 6, 1887, *ibid.;* Cleveland to Rosecrans (draft), July 22, 1887, *ibid.;* Reverend Joseph P. Foster to Cleveland, August 5, 1887, *ibid.*

gance, impudence, intolerance, falsehood and brutality that this country has known." In attacking Fairchild and Tuttle, these papers dismissed the former as self-seeking and raked up the latter's unsavory past. The *Nation*, entering the fray with characteristic vigor, defended the President's veto policy and flayed those Grand Army members who had insulted the nation's highest office. If Fairchild thought Cleveland ought to die for his flag order, the general should not "blasphemously call on God to slay him, but step up like a man and assassinate him himself." Soon the Republican press was backing from its original aggressive position into a defensive corner.[6]

The attacks of the Democratic and Independent journals had another effect; they crystallized public sentiment in Cleveland's support. Undoubtedly, too, the President's own policy was partly responsible for the growing belief that the Grand Army was placing itself more and more in the wrong. If his unconsidered assent to the flag order had been a serious political blunder, his statements since that time had been as unexceptionable as those of Grand Army firebrands were questionable. His attitude throughout was that he was doing his public duty to the best of his ability; he could only regret that some of his opponents so far forgot their loyalty to their country as to insult its first officer.[7]

Conservative Grand Army leaders grew increasingly alarmed at the success of Democratic papers in attaching a partisanship stigma to their society. Robert Beath complained that the public read the accusations but never saw the G.A.R.'s answers. The *Nation* had declared, "The danger of serious harm from the Grand Army has been removed by the exposure which it has . . . made of its character. If it were universally supposed to be an association of old soldiers devoted unselfishly to public interests, its weight might be thrown with tremendous force for or against any measure or any man." This was precisely what the conservative leaders had worked for years to accomplish; they would not per-

[6] Little Rock *Arkansas Gazette*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 389; New York *Daily Graphic*, July 12, 1887; Gen. M. Brayman to Fairchild, August 27, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; *Nation*, XLIV, 524; "President Cleveland and the Soldiers," *ibid.*, XLV, 26; editorial, *ibid.*, 61; "General Tuttle," *ibid.*, 82; Chicago *Tribune*, July 2, 11, 20, 1887; New York *Tribune*, July 10, 12, September 2, 15, October 20, December 1, 1887.

[7] For Cleveland's attitude on sectionalism, see Nevins, *Cleveland*, 325.

mit the fruit of their efforts to be destroyed without a struggle. And under the influence of their disapproval, the boiling wrath of the extremists gradually cooled.[8]

Republican politicians also softened their tone. John Sherman accepted Hanna's advice and, addressing the reunion of Pickett's division with those who survived its famous charge, declared that there need no longer be "a danger line between Union and Confederate soldiers or Northern and Southern citizens." Only Foraker was incorrigible; he would not relinquish an issue that was proving so profitable in his re-election campaign.[9]

Several G.A.R. leaders urged Commander Fairchild to ignore the presidential invitation and flag incidents at the national encampment. Robert Beath wrote: ". . . we must be careful at St. Louis and do nothing to bring reproach on the order." The society's national judge advocate general counseled the commander to treat both issues with "dignified silence . . . it will be safer." S. S. Burdett, however, believed that it would be "impossible to suppress allusion to and action respecting these things. 'The boys' who have least wisdom will get in work on the subject somehow. . . . The problem is how to introduce it and manage it when introduced so that the deliverance on the subject shall be reasonably impersonal and thoroughly dignified." He advised that Fairchild devote a brief paragraph of his address to the controversial matters in order to eliminate voluntary resolutions. "Safe anchorage" on the invitation dispute, he believed, would be the argument that whatever G.A.R. opposition existed to the President's presence was "incited by the fear that it might be made the occasion of bringing party politics into the organization." [10]

Fairchild's brother, more interested in the general's chances for the presidential nomination than in re-establishing Grand Army prestige, gave similar counsel. He urged Fairchild to adopt General Sherman's tone "and say that the G.A.R. will always be proud to welcome the President whenever *he may come* to the national encampment and will treat him with the respect due to his high

[8] Beath to Fairchild, August 14, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; "The Grand Army Machine," *Nation,* XLV, 26.

[9] *Nation,* XLV, 1; Philadelphia *Times,* quoted in *Public Opinion,* III, 272.

[10] Beath to Fairchild, August 14, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; Henry E. Tainter to *id.,* August 11, 1887, *ibid.;* Burdett to *id.,* August 4, 1887, *ibid.*

office." As for pensions, "You will put the President squarely in the wrong if you make it clear that the G.A.R. is not organized for the purpose of raiding the U.S. Treasury." [11] Fairchild apparently took these words of wisdom to heart.

All the leaders save Foraker had been muffled; but the lesser officers, inflamed by Fairchild and Tuttle, were not so quickly subdued. Their hostility to Cleveland set off still another explosion. Late in August the Army of West Virginia held a reunion at Wheeling attended by G.A.R. posts from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia. An enterprising Democratic editor suspended from his office window a banner bearing Cleveland's picture and the inscription, "God Bless our President, Commander-in-Chief of our Army and Navy." This flag hung directly over the parade's route and aroused the suspicion of members that it was a deliberate goad. Nevertheless, the first columns marched under it quietly; former President Hayes recorded that he doffed his hat and saluted, as did his comrades. But as Pennsylvania members approached the picture, a Pittsburgh leader stopped and cried: "Are we going to walk under this thing?" Shouting "No, no! He is no friend of ours!" the veterans crowded into the gutter to avoid passing beneath the banner. Succeeding posts followed their example; some even furled their colors or trailed them in the street. As the excited spectators hissed or cheered, some Democratic members stalked from the ranks in disgust.[12]

That evening when the Pennsylvania Union Veteran League serenaded the reunion's leaders at the McClure House, the crowd called for speakers. During Governor Wilson's impromptu address, a heckler asked if the men who wore the gray were not traitors. The West Virginia governor replied at some length, arguing that Confederate soldiers were entitled to as much credit as members of the Union armies. Ohio's General William H. Gibson immediately came forward to deny this slur upon "the brave men who died for the Union," and Wilson then returned to charge

[11] Charles Fairchild to Fairchild, September 12, 1887, *ibid.;* "Mars" to *id.*, September 27, 1887, *ibid.*

[12] Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes,* IV, 337; Josiah Lightner to Cleveland, September 5, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; New York *Tribune,* August 27, 28, 1887; Chicago *Tribune,* August 31, 1887; Washington *National Tribune,* September 1, 1887; *Nation,* XLV, 161; *Public Opinion,* III, 453–56.

that the reunion's real purpose was to "dragoon Democratic soldiers of West Virginia into voting the Republican ticket." Amid mingled catcalls and cheers from the growing crowd, Foraker was demanded. It was a situation to delight the heart of the fire-eating governor; he "made the fur fly" for an hour. Foraker announced that he had never before heard the words "Republicans" and "Democrats" used in a reunion address and expressed pained surprise that Wilson should inject politics into a nonpartisan assembly. But since the subject was introduced he was duty-bound to answer. In an acrid bloody-shirt speech, he charged that the South had repeatedly violated the war's results. Regarding the day's incident, he remarked that he had not been displeased with the banner inscribed "God Bless our President"; he hoped, indeed, that the President would be blessed "with a more appropriate appreciation" for the brave soldiers' sacrifices.[13]

Once more the press blazed forth in defense or denunciation of the Grand Army. Excited Pittsburgh members met to consider whether delegates to the national encampment were likely to encounter banners along the parade route; St. Louis journals immediately announced that they would find none. The President expressed his conviction to a New York *World* representative that St. Louis committees would refrain from displaying his picture to avoid "the chance even of comment." He expressed equal confidence that the "unscrupulous politicians" would fail in their efforts to turn veterans aside from their desire for peace and good citizenship.[14]

Undoubtedly in Cleveland's estimation the outspoken Foraker ranked first among these "unscrupulous politicians." The Ohio governor, indeed, complained loudly and repeatedly that the President lacked restraint; that he had been rude to the point of ignoring an invitation to stop at Columbus on his trip westward.[15] Mrs. Cleveland, who shared her husband's resentment, made her feelings public in an incident which produced still another news-

[13] Quotation from Cadiz (Ohio) *Republican* in Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life*, I, 272–77; Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, IV, 337.

[14] *Public Opinion*, III, 432, 453–56; St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, September 2, 1887; New York *World*, September 7, 1887; New York *Tribune*, September 2, 1887; Chicago *Tribune*, August 31, 1887.

[15] Foraker, *Speeches*, I, 129, 130.

paper sensation. This occurred at the Philadelphia centennial celebration, attended by the Clevelands as well as the Forakers and other public figures.

The affair began auspiciously enough with a display of mutual respect on the part of the President and the Grand Army. A good proportion of the twenty-five thousand parading veterans were G.A.R. men; they carefully dipped their tattered battle flags in salute as they passed the presidential reviewing stand. Those who doffed their hats received approving cheers from the crowd. While the boys passed, Cleveland remained uncovered and returned their salutes. The President's bride, slender and charming in close-fitting gray, enjoyed the parade from a balcony opposite. She applauded vigorously and waved her handkerchief as the governors passed. But when the Ohio troops approached, she turned to talk to a cabinet member's wife; and just as Foraker appeared, the First Lady turned her back to the procession and remained so until the Ohio troops had passed.[16]

While tongues were still wagging over this rebuff, Mrs. Cleveland administered her second famous snub. As the Forakers proceeded down the receiving line at the reception, the President shook their hands with expressionless countenance, but his wife folded her hands to stare at the governor without recognition. Ignoring Mrs. Foraker's outstretched hand, she nodded frigidly. The governor's wife remarked angrily to Hayes, "Mrs. Hayes would never have treated any human being as Mrs. Cleveland treated me." [17] The fact that the First Lady was known for her gracious manner gave special point to these rebuffs and indicated how deeply the personal vituperation of the flag controversy had cut.

Mrs. Cleveland received some unfavorable press comment on the score of "bad taste," but this was as nothing compared with the attacks on the Grand Army for the Wheeling incident. Even some of the participants were afterwards shocked at what they

[16] Chicago *Tribune,* September 16, 17, 19, 1887; Beath to Fairchild, August 14, 1887, Fairchild MSS.

[17] Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes,* IV, 339; Chicago *Tribune,* September 19, 22, 1887; Foraker, *I Would Live It Again,* 102, 166, 167; Elmer Edward Noyes, "The Ohio G.A.R. and Politics from 1866 to 1900," in *Ohio State Archeological and Historical Quarterly* (Columbus, 1887–), LV (1946), 93.

had done; they remarked to each other at dinner, "Why, we were no better than the rebels!" Through the series of sensations climaxing one another during the summer, in fact, the Democrats seemed to be gaining with former soldiers as well as the public. Several veterans urged Cleveland to heighten his prestige by including in his westward tour the national soldiers' homes, over which Republicans were cementing their control. One Grand Army post commander wrote that an official trip to these institutions would "have an excellent effect and silence the cavil which the pension agents and their tools in and out of the G.A.R. are so ready to make." [18]

Other Democrats believed that a ceremonial stop at Lincoln's tomb would re-establish the President in the estimation of the Union's defenders. One warned, ". . . the President cant afford to pass within half a mile of Lincoln's Tomb, and not stop, and *shed a tear* over the remains. . . . a louder howl will be made over it, if he does, than went up over the 'Rebel Flag' matter." [19] This and similar advice went unheeded, but Cleveland did agree to visit the national soldiers' home at Milwaukee.

Another Democratic device was the movement to elect General Henry W. Slocum G.A.R. commander in chief. Republican leaders were determined to block this plan, not only because they feared that a Democratic commander might make political use of the society but also because Slocum headed the minority that clamored for service pensions. Conservative Republican Grand Army leaders realized that because the public was unprepared for the service pension idea, Democratic leadership could make the movement seriously embarrassing.[20]

Democrats were well aware of the potentialities in this situation; rumors soon spread that at Cleveland's request Rosecrans and Commissioner Black were urging members to support the general.

[18] Chicago *Tribune*, September 19, 22, 1887; Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, IV, 340; Lightner to Cleveland, September 5, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; A. W. Thurman to Lamont, November 1, 1887, *ibid.;* McMahon to Cleveland, July 7, 1887, *ibid.;* Col. L. A. Harris to Carlisle, June 20, 1887, *ibid.;* Carlisle to Cleveland, June 21, 1887, *ibid.;* S. F. Neely to J. C. Black, September 16, 1887, *ibid.*

[19] George Judd to Hon. John H. Oberly, September 20, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; V. E. Foy to Cleveland, September 24, 1887, *ibid.;* Springer to Lamont, September 24, 1887, *ibid.*

[20] Merrill to Fairchild, May 3, 1887, Fairchild MSS.

Black wrote to Fairchild at great length, pressing Slocum's cause and emphasizing that his election would soothe the anxiety of Democratic members over the society's recent partisan expressions:

> You know that the election of a democrat . . . would not enable him to deliver a single republican vote in your organization and would not enable him to turn the moral power of that organization next year into a political channel favorable to his political associates. It would simply be an announcement to the world that the Grand Army of the Republic in the approaching presidential campaign is and will be a neutral force. . . . isn't it worth that much of a sacrifice on the part of the majority of the members . . . that the minority . . . may be satisfied that they mean what they have been saying for twenty years?

Black warned that should his advice be disregarded, the society would be "torn by internal dissensions and . . . become an acknowledged and real political machine." [21]

At the end of September the largest group of soldiers to assemble since the close of the war gathered at St. Louis. Police stood prepared to remove partisan flags while citizens decked the city in gala colors. But the Grand Army found its enthusiasm dampened by the steady downpour which continued throughout the encampment. Banners hung limp as the veterans splashed through the driving rain in their annual parade; hotel managers rejoiced as the shivering boys abandoned their waterlogged camps to crowd into hotel corridors and storerooms.[22]

Conservatives, holding firm rein on the encampment's proceedings, quietly blocked any hostile expression against the administration. Prominent members grumbled in private conversation that the "non-partisan hobby" was "being ridden to death," but they accepted the ban on official mention of the invitation or flag controversies. Fairchild's moderate address indicated that he valued

[21] New York *Mail and Express*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 545; Black to Fairchild, September 22, 1887, Fairchild MSS.

[22] New York *Tribune*, September 26, 27, 28, October 1, 1887; Chicago *Tribune*, September 26, 28, 1887; "General Orders No. 15," July 11, 1887, *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 313.

good counsel. At its conclusion, however, he proclaimed that the society had never wished "to open again the bloody chasm"; moreover, it would protest when others attempted to do so by "holding up for especial honor and distinction anything that . . . glorifies the cause of disunion." The audience, accepting this as a direct reference to the flag incident, arose in a body and cheered.[23]

This oblique comment was the closest the encampment came to any official statement on the society's running difficulties with the President. Concerning pensions Fairchild merely expressed regret that the disability bill had met final defeat. He announced that the posts had almost unanimously approved the new bill that the G.A.R. pension committee had prepared and presented to them. When Vandervoort offered resolutions condemning Cleveland for his veto, Charles Grosvenor of Ohio warned that the society's enemies would seize upon them as evidence of partisanship. "The eyes of the country are turned in the direction of St. Louis. Everywhere the question is upon the minds of the people: will the Grand Army . . . be dignified and uphold its principles without degenerating into a political squabble? . . ." The encampment defeated Vandervoort's resolutions.[24]

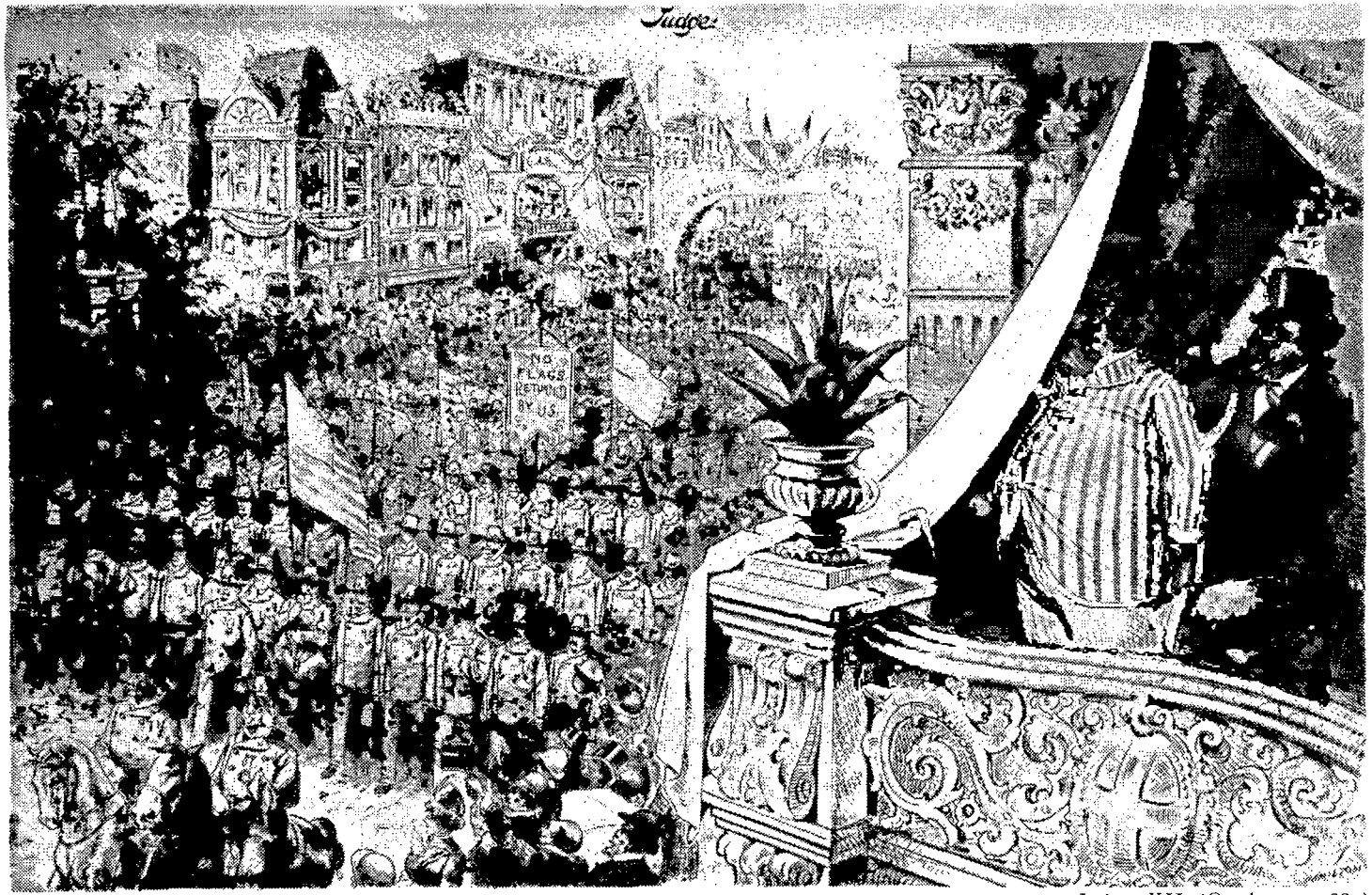
The pension question was the occasion for the assembly's only heated discussion. Those who wanted the G.A.R. to lobby for stipends based on service alone supported a minority report against the pension committee's more conservative recommendations. This group urged that if the society demanded service pensions, Congress would grant the disability measure as a compromise. But the faction went down to defeat by a vote of 318 to 173.[25]

In the election struggle Slocum received support from eastern advocates of service pensions, but Republican leaders abhorred the thought of a Democratic leader. The St. Louis press reported Beath as saying, "There never was a democratic commander-in-chief of the Grand Army . . . and by the eternal God there never will be," and asserted that Tanner was busy "putting the knife under Slocum's ribs." The election of John P. Rea of Minne-

[23] *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 50; Chicago *Tribune*, September 29, 30, 1887.

[24] *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 36, 164–69, 210–16; Chicago *Tribune*, September 26, 29, October 1, 1887.

[25] *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 41, 198–202, 230–33.



Judge, XII (October 1, 1887)

ST. LOUIS, SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1887

CLEVELAND.—"Ah! I've lost the votes of all those men."

SOLID SOUTH.—"Yes, but by snubbing them you have made me 'solid' for you!"

sota was generally regarded as a victory for the society's conservative Republican leaders. As Black had warned, Democratic papers proclaimed Slocum's defeat the final proof that the G.A.R. was a Republican machine.[26]

A few days after the aging warriors abandoned their futile struggle with the elements, the Clevelands arrived. Sunny skies added warmth to the ovation they received, and only one incident marred the city's hospitality. On the fairgrounds a G.A.R. enthusiast hurled a pancake at the President. After leaving St. Louis the Clevelands visited the soldiers' home at Milwaukee; the Republican press made much of the cold silence with which the boys received them.[27]

As the flag issue was fading at last from the headlines, another incident aroused Republicans to renewed energy in deepening the "bloody chasm." At a reunion of Confederate soldiers in Macon, Georgia, General Henry R. Jackson, Cleveland's minister to Mexico, announced that the principle for which the South had fought, "home rule as contrasted with Roman centralization," would eventually triumph; Davis would then be recognized as the rightful president. Republican papers seized upon the address, and for a week the "Lost Cause" was the prominent subject of press discussion. The Indianapolis *Journal* warned that if the Democrats won in 1888, the country might expect "a frequent repetition of such scenes and many other things now undreamed of or but dimly foreshadowed," while the Philadelphia *Press* declared that the incident justified "the indignation of those Union veterans who so vigorously protested against the return of the flags." [28]

But this time Grand Army men failed to flare up, because their leaders were alarmed at the threatened defection of Democrats from the society and carefully side-stepped the issue. These officers showed equal restraint when Cleveland nominated the southerner Lucius Lamar to the Supreme Court and when, the following spring, Congressman Ingalls shouted that the Confederacy

[26] *Ibid.*, 206–207, 238; *Public Opinion*, III, 545, 547–48; R. H. Schooley to Lamont, May 21, 1888, Cleveland MSS.

[27] Stevens, "When Cleveland Came to St. Louis," *loc. cit.*, 154–55; Chicago *Tribune*, October 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 1887.

[28] *Public Opinion*, IV, 73–77; Chicago *Tribune*, October 29, 1887.

would find its triumph in a Democratic victory. They remained silent, too, when the suppression of the Negro vote in the South became a prominent topic of press discussion.[29]

As the Grand Army ceased hurling epithets, prominent Republicans—always excepting Foraker [30]—approached unanimity in the conclusion that this time renewed sectional animosity would alienate from the party at least as much support as it gained. But abandonment of the barren sectional issue left them at a loss for campaign material. The currency problem was dangerous, Cleveland's administration invulnerable, and the country prosperous under Democratic guidance. While Democrats grew increasingly confident, the prospects of Cleveland's re-election plunged Republicans in gloom.

Once more Cleveland supplied his opponents with an issue. He had more reason than Republicans to fear the parading of Union veterans behind the bloody shirt; it is possible that his decision to focus public attention upon a current problem was based in part upon the desire to end the preoccupation of press and public with sectional prejudices. Against the advice of the few advisers whom he consulted, the President devoted his annual message of December, 1887, exclusively to the surplus problem and the necessity for tariff reform. Republicans rejoiced; here was an issue that gave them a chance for victory. The House bill incorporating Cleveland's suggestions met defeat in the Senate, but the debates on the measure formed the basis for the presidential campaign. Republicans had to admit that the surplus was becoming embarrassing, but the interests they represented demanded some other means of disposing of it than tariff reduction.[31]

At just this point the pension issue presented itself to Republicans as a double blessing. To grant veterans' demands not only

[29] Nevins, *Cleveland*, 322–39; *Public Opinion*, IV, 149, 169, 295–96, 373–76, 427, 572, V, 109, 131; McElroy, *Cleveland, Man and Statesman*, I, 189–217.

[30] New York *Daily Graphic*, October 18, 1887.

[31] C. Joseph Bernardo, "The Presidential Election of 1888" (MS. doctoral dissertation, Georgetown University, 1949); Rochester (N.Y.) *Post-Express*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, III, 292; Charles Scranton to Harrison, December 7, 1887, Harrison MSS.; Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic*, 154; Stoddard, *As I Knew Them*, 152; Chicago *Tribune*, December 7, 8, 1887; Nevins, *Cleveland*, 367–94; Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 276–77; Muzzey, *James G. Blaine*, 348; Louis M. Hacker, "The Bonus Boys of 1861–1865," in *American Mercury* (New York, 1924–), XXVII (1932), 424, 425.

would reduce the surplus considerably, but would bind the old soldier to the party with chains of gold. The connection between the surplus and the possibility of pension legislation was by no means a new idea; early in 1886 Senator Harrison had begun assuring veterans that Democratic tariff-reformers would never support "any large pension increase" because that would "interfere with their plans" to reduce the revenue. This argument did not assume prominence, however, until the fall of 1887, when the *National Tribune* repeatedly pointed out that should the Treasury be depleted through tariff reduction, further pension legislation was extremely unlikely. After September, Lemon abandoned his efforts to associate Cleveland with the Lost Cause and concentrated upon the necessity for a continued high tariff. Soldiers' enemies, he declared, had altered their tactics, and were "massing . . . under the banner of 'Revenue Reduction' to deliver what they hope will be a fatal assault on all manner of additional pensions. . . . Let the comrades everywhere array themselves in solid front against this." [32]

After Cleveland's tariff message, the editor became more vehement; and he now presented the bondholders as allies of the former soldiers: "We reiterate that there is a conspiracy . . . to reduce the revenue so as to prevent both the increase of pensions to veterans and the payment of the debt to the bondholders." Through the spring and summer of 1888, Lemon accompanied his pleas for pension legislation with demands that the high tariff remain untouched.[33]

After Cleveland's December message, Republicans voiced similar arguments. Emotional appeals based on the flag incident faded to the background as pension promises were heard on every hand. Assuring the former soldiers that Democrats would make no concessions, Republicans promised that they would provide well for the nation's saviors if they were given a chance. The Providence *Journal* pointed out that the offer placed the party in the position of "practically bidding for votes." Republicans used this device

[32] Harrison to N. C. Burge, May 15, 1886, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to T. S. Brooks, March 19, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to J. D. Hathaway, June 8, 1886, *ibid.; id.* to James E. Parker, June 9, 1886, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune,* October 27, November 3, 17, 24, December 8, 1887, January 5, June 14, 1888.

[33] Washington *National Tribune,* January 5, 12, February 2, 23, March 1, 1888.

most extensively in the West, particularly in Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Minnesota, where "great communities" had been "chiefly populated by the survivors of the Union army and navy." *Harper's Weekly* commented that in these states "the organization of the pension movement" was "very complete, and the pension claim made practically one of the chief issues for the campaign of next year." [34]

Grand Army encampment resolutions during the spring of 1888 indicated that veterans were preparing to press their advantage. An occasional expression on the flag issue appeared, but in the main the veterans concentrated on pensions. Members heatedly debated the question of whether the G.A.R. should officially demand pensions based on service rather than disability. Under the *National Tribune*'s steady encouragement, the service pension movement had rapidly gained ground; but only a few encampments gave it majority support. Apparently many agreed with Fairchild and the organization's lobbying committee that it was best to concentrate on a disability bill and reserve further demands until that victory was achieved. The members were convinced, however, as their resolutions clearly showed, that a disability measure was the least Congress could give them.[35]

The pension issue was well aired in Congress, too, before the launching of the campaign. Late in 1887 Senator Charles Manderson introduced the bill prepared by the G.A.R. committee and sanctioned by the national encampment. Opponents, terming the measure a protectionist scheme to spend the surplus without tariff revision, denounced the Grand Army as a political organization that threw "its iron glove into the debates" and sent Congress "bills through its accredited Senators." Nevertheless, enough Democrats were sufficiently eager to disprove charges of hostility toward veterans to join Republicans in passing the bill.[36]

In the House the pension question assumed the form of a con-

[34] Quoted in *Harper's Weekly*, XXXI (August 20, 1887), 591; *ibid.* (December 24, 1887), 934; *Journal 22nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1888, p. 33.

[35] *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Washington and Alaska* (1888–1918), 1888, p. 18; *Proceedings Encampments New York G.A.R.*, 1888, p. 162.

[36] *Cong. Record*, 50 Cong., 1 Sess., February 29, March 8, 1888, pp. 1589, 1866; *Public Opinion*, IV, 551; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 178; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 220.

test between two aspirants for the Indiana gubernatorial chair. Colonel C. C. Matson, prospective Democratic candidate, hoped to win the support of Indiana veterans, reportedly almost evenly divided between the two parties. A colleague presented a bill in Matson's name in order to deprive the pension committee of credit for its introduction. This measure was not so lavish as the Senate bill, and it brought sharp protests from the committee's Republican minority.[37]

Matson's bluff was called by the president of the Service Pension Association, General Alvin P. Hovey, whose title, "the Logan of Indiana," was well earned. Hovey believed that his shouts for service pensions had carried him to Washington; he expected to attain the governorship with similar methods. Shortly after the introduction of Matson's bill, therefore, he proclaimed his championship for service pensions, land bounties, and an equalization bill. He warned that the boys in blue would "bury more Congressmen politically who vote against them than ever fell upon any field of battle." When Matson tried to outbid the general with another arrears bill, Republicans again called his bluff by maneuvering to bring the measure up for consideration. Republicans took pleasure in pointing out that while Matson was claiming credit for pressing pension legislation, he was at the same time quietly working to block its passage.[38]

With the introduction of the Mills bill, the pension question became merged with that of tariff reform. Debates on this measure indicated that Republicans regarded pension legislation as the magic means of eliminating the surplus. While Democrats complained that their opponents favored extravagant pension measures only to make tariff reform possible, Republicans countered that the administration was hoarding money in order to justify demands for revenue reduction. That, they shouted, was the underlying reason for Cleveland's disability-bill veto. Surely veterans had first claim on the surplus; give the boys what they deserved, and the surplus problem would dissolve. Democrats

[37] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 175–78.

[38] *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 231–32; Charles Manning Walker, *Hovey and Chase: Life of General Alvin Hovey, . . . Together with a Sketch of Ira J. Chase . . .* (Indianapolis, 1888), 170; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 177–82.

valiantly resisted Republican efforts to fix a day for consideration of pension measures. The Chicago *Tribune* commented, "The Democratic majority of the House is in a bad spot and the Republicans know it and intend to profit to the utmost by it." [39]

Democrats had indeed been maneuvered into an embarrassing position. The cause to which they were committed was diametrically opposed to the pension movement; yet they dreaded entering the campaign as the enemies of soldiers' interests. Matson's strategy exemplified the efforts of Democrats to conceal their position. Alarmed supporters urged Cleveland to visit the national veterans' homes or make soldier appointments in order to "save the soldier vote." Others believed his only chance for re-election lay in immediate sponsorship of a pension measure. One man wrote, "The Soldier & his son hold the ballance [*sic*] of power in this country today . . . and its [*sic*] quite human & natural for them both to . . . yield allegiance to their friends. . . . The friendships, the good will, the heart & soul of the soldier will go where his pension lies, just as easily & certainly as that water flows down hill. . . ." Although Cleveland could not advocate extravagant pension expenditures, he did grant an interview to the Grand Army's commander in chief, during which, according to Rea, he expressed "the kindliest feelings toward all old union soldiers." [40]

Anxious followers did what they could. Some attended G.A.R. meetings to refute Republican charges that Cleveland hated the soldiers, while others continued to clamor for a rival society. No new association developed, but leaders of the Union Veteran Legion, a national organization formed in 1884, quietly worked for the administration.[41]

One Democratic effort to achieve an appearance of reconcilia-

[39] Chicago *Tribune,* June 20, 1888.

[40] Washington *National Tribune,* May 31, 1888; McMahon to Lamont, June 27, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; Rosecrans to Cleveland, September 3, 1887, *ibid.;* Schooley to Lamont, May 21, 1888, *ibid.;* C. R. Spore to Cleveland, April 15, 1888, *ibid.;* James T. Walsh to Lamont, September 3, 1887, *ibid.;* S. N. McMillan to Cleveland, November 7, 1887, *ibid.;* C. A. Smith to Cleveland, November 26, 1887, *ibid.;* J. V. Davis to *id.,* November 12, 1887, *ibid.;* Edward P. Clark to Lamont, January 6, 1888, *ibid.;* John P. Rea to Lamont, January 23, 1888, *ibid.*

[41] Foster to Cleveland, August 5, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; J. B. Stewart to Lamont, January 9, 1888, *ibid.;* William A. Maline to Cleveland, February 9, 1888, *ibid.;* H. J. Crouch to *id.,* May 10, 1888, *ibid.*

New York *Daily Graphic*, March 5, 1888

SENATOR VEST'S DREAM

tion between Cleveland and the Grand Army produced an echo of the previous year's furious shouting. When the Brooklyn arrangements committee for a G.A.R. Memorial Day parade invited Cleveland to attend, the committee's Republican minority voiced an indignant protest. One post commander announced, "I will not be responsible for what my post will do if a Presidential party candidate is set up to be cheered and hurrahed for only five days before he is to be nominated." But the minority was unable to have the invitation withdrawn, and the President reviewed some fifteen thousand marchers, most of them G.A.R. men. The New York *Herald*, reporting that the ranks cheered Cleveland "again and again," commented that all the gossip about hard feelings "melted into nothingness in the presence of the overwhelming and warm hearted demonstration." The paper hailed the presence of the Richmond Grays at Grant's Tomb as evidence that it was "all over, the bitterness and the hate. . . . there was no longer any blue or gray to divide the American people." [42]

But Republicans did not intend to permit an election-year Decoration Day to become a love feast between the veterans and a Democratic President; nor were they willing to see it strengthen friendship between North and South. The New York *Tribune*, which had publicized Grand Army protests to the Cleveland invitation, reported that during the parade some post commanders and nine-tenths of the veterans forgot to salute and that colorbearers neglected to dip their flags. A story spread that members of the Harlem post to which Fairchild had delivered his "palsied be the hand" speech pointedly refrained from dipping their flags, but this was hotly denied by the post commander. Grand Army leaders might have made much of the incident, but they prudently held their tongues. The doughty General Sherman, however, was not to be suppressed. He told his comrades in an open letter that they should spend their Decoration Days in the cemeteries among the dead, not marching around in honor of politicians and "belligerent non-combatants." Chauncey Depew made certain that the day should not end on a note of sectional friendliness; before he

[42] New York *Tribune*, May 12, 1888; New York *Herald*, May 31, 1888; J. D. Bell to Cleveland, May 25, 1888, Cleveland MSS.

would forget what the war meant or why it was fought, he proclaimed at the Metropolitan Opera House services, he would nail the bloody shirt "to the masthead." [43]

The Democratic platform, hewing to the low-tariff line, gave scant support to pension champions like Matson, who made extravagant promises to veterans. It boasted that the administration, "while carefully guarding the interests of the taxpayers and conforming strictly to the principles of justice and equity . . . has paid out more for pensions and bounties . . . than has ever been paid during an equal period"; but it made no promises for the future. There had been much talk of strengthening Cleveland's renomination with a soldier-decoy—the vice-presidential booms for Black and for Postmaster General William Vilas had been in full swing for at least a year—but the plum fell to Allen G. Thurman, who could make no claim to veterans' favor.[44]

Republicans, on the other hand, made a powerful bid for the veterans' vote. The convention generously allotted two hundred tickets to the Grand Army. Although the platform promised no specific legislation, its guarantee of largess was clear:

> The gratitude of the Nation to the defenders of the Union cannot be measured by laws. The legislation of Congress should conform to the pledges made by a loyal people, and be so enlarged and extended as to provide against the possibility that any man who honorably wore the Federal uniform should become an inmate of an almshouse, or dependent upon private charity. In the presence of an overflowing Treasury, it would be a public scandal to do less for those whose valorous service preserved the Government.
>
> We denounce the hostile spirit shown by President Cleveland in his numerous vetoes of measures for pension relief, and the action of the Democratic House of Representatives in refusing even a consideration of general pension legislation.[45]

[43] New York *Tribune*, May 12, 13, 21, 29, 31, 1888; A. M. Underhill, to Fairchild, June 15, 1888, Fairchild MSS.; New York *Herald*, May 31, June 1, 3, 1888; Minneapolis *Tribune*, May 31, 1888; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, June 1, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.

[44] *Proceedings of the Democratic National Convention 1888*, 95; *Public Opinion*, III, 432; Chicago *Tribune*, July 7, 1887.

[45] McMurry, "The Soldier Vote in Iowa in the Election of 1888," *loc. cit.*,

A glance at the list of prominent aspirants for first place on the ticket would suggest that it was indeed a soldiers' year. Fully half of the candidates were veterans; two were Grand Army leaders. Fairchild realized that he was out of the race when his own state declared for Jeremiah Rusk, but Michigan's Russell A. Alger hoped that his popularity among veterans and particularly with Grand Army men would turn the tide in his favor. Alger's career was a distinct political asset; with the loyal aid of a beautiful wife who had deserted a life of luxury to share his hardships, the general had risen from the bottom of the economic ladder to become a lumber king. Another advantage was the experienced assistance which the widow of his old crony, the Black Eagle, was eager to give. The boys had great affection for Mrs. Logan, who attended many of their reunions and who remembered their names and also the field or hospital background of her first meeting with them. She used her considerable influence in the millionaire's favor and accompanied him to Chicago in order to advance his cause. But rumors that Alger was buying votes became so persistent that politicians, wary of a scandal charge, were frightened away.[46]

Foraker, although nominally a Sherman supporter, hoped that the vicissitudes of politics might lead the convention to his door. The delegates were given a pointed reminder of his prominence in the flag controversy; just as he reached the platform to speak, attendants brought forward an enormous floral piece in which red, white, and blue flowers spelled out his famous telegram. But the

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349–56; New York *Tribune*, June 22, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, June 22, 1888; William McKinley, Jr. to Harrison, undated, Harrison MSS.

[46] W. E. Gardner to Senator Sawyer, September 16, 1887, Fairchild MSS.; Fairchild to his brother, Charles, May 11, 1888, *ibid.*; John H. Cook to Fairchild, May 23, 1888, *ibid.*; John Sherman to W. T. Sherman, January 15, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, April 4, 1888., *ibid.*; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, January 18, 1888, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, April 1, 1888, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, June 1, 1888, *ibid.*; W. S. McNair to W. T. Sherman, July 8, 1888, *ibid.*; *Public Opinion*, IV, 470, V, 4, 27, 15, 155; Foraker, *I Would Live It Again*, 106, 119, 122; New York *Tribune*, May 9, June 4, 23, 1888; New York *Herald*, June 3, 1888; Minneapolis *Tribune*, June 17, 20, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, May 9, 1887, June 14, 21, 1888; Mrs. Logan's correspondence, 1887 ff., Logan MSS.; R. A. Alger to Sherman, July 17, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.; W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, July 24, 1888, *ibid.*; John Sherman to W. T. Sherman, July 27, 1888, *ibid.*; W. T. Sherman to Alger, July 19, 1888, Harrison MSS.; Alger to Harrison, February 4, 1889, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, February 7, 1889, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, February 11, 1889, *ibid.*; W. T. Sherman to Alger, February 8, 1889, *ibid.*

immediate uproar in the convention led the governor's enemies to charge that he was deliberately spotlighting himself as a possible candidate. Many agreed that their choice must fall upon a man with "a soldier's record," but they were by no means disposed to favor the ringleaders in the past year's display of bad feelings.[47]

The final choice, in fact, fell upon a veteran who had never pursued the soldiers' vote with sledge-hammer methods, as had Logan and Fairchild. For ten years after the war, Benjamin Harrison had steadily refused to enter politics; and when he did, his touch upon the "Lost Cause" theme was delicate. Although he favored a generous pension policy, he had never espoused the extravagant bounty or service-pension measures. Much like Hayes in his policy toward veterans, Harrison had throughout his senatorship worked quietly but assiduously in their interests. In 1885, he remarked that he had "looked after four thousand soldiers' pension claims" since his arrival in Washington. A year later he recorded that he was receiving from two to twenty letters daily from hopeful claimants, that he had interceded with the Pension Bureau for all, and that he had won passage for as many private pension bills as any other man in the Senate. The disability bill accorded with his theory that there should be "room in the ambulance" for every old soldier unable to work, and his championship of the measure was well known. Like Hayes, Harrison sincerely believed that the veterans deserved generous treatment.[48]

So far as the boys were concerned, Harrison was undoubtedly a fortunate choice; his correspondence was filled with expressions of their delight at his nomination. One of them wrote: ". . . I today feel the old thrill and my old blood once more tingles in my veins as I try to realize that our old beloved colonel is again in command." Another "could not keep back the tears" as he read

[47] Foraker, *I Would Live It Again*, 103, 106.

[48] Harrison to his wife, May 21, 1865, Harrison MSS.; J. Scott Harrison to his son, June 21, 1871, *ibid.*; Harrison to L. M. Campbell, December 1, 1875, *ibid.*; *id.* to James H. Stephenson, May 16, 1885, Tibbott Transcripts, *ibid.*; *id.* to James Vandolan, June 24, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to Hon. James T. Johnson, January 14, 1885, *ibid.*; *id.* to Charles P. Hopkins, December 12, 1885, *ibid.*; *id.* to George H. Campbell, February 6, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to Gen. R. C. Drum, War Department, June 9, 1886, Tibbott Transcripts, *ibid.*; *id.* to Mathew Duckworth, July 26, 1886, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, December 6, 1886, *ibid.*

about the visit to Harrison of the "dear old 70th" boys: "Yes, your talk . . . called up memories . . . and stirred the deepest emotions of my soul." Still another, learning that the general was subject to neuralgia, penned a long letter urging his wife's time-tested remedy.[49]

In view of the many observations by the general's contemporaries regarding his cold and repellent personality, it is an interesting fact that he received many more expressions of warm affection than had the more blatantly obvious "soldier's friend" four years before. This may have been partly because the boys were four years older and hence more sentimental and partly because they were more impressed with Harrison's attainment of first place on the ticket. Certainly in 1888 they were more conscious of group solidarity than they had been in 1884. And perhaps, too, they sensed Harrison's fundamental sincerity. While in the field, his first thought had been for the job to be done rather than for the possibilities of political reward. In 1864 he wrote his wife that he could not tell when he would be home because he would not leave his regiment "to the command of another in a fight. I have got to love them for their bravery and for dangers we have shared together. I have heard many similar expressions of the men toward me." [50]

Republicans made full use of this sentimental attachment of the veterans for their comrade. While Harrison remained quietly at his Indianapolis home, delegations of soldiers called upon him. Greeting them informally, the general assured the boys that "the

[49] William S. Canalsey to Harrison, June 25, 1888, Harrison MSS.; S. W. Dungan to *id.*, July 2, 1888, *ibid.;* Ira C. McClentham to *id.*, July 18, 1888, *ibid.;* George W. Carr to *id.*, June 28, 1888, *ibid.;* Thomas Colton to *id.*, June 25, 1888, *ibid.;* J. W. Fullenwider to *id.*, June 25, 1888, *ibid.;* M. Krebs to *id.*, June 25, 1888, *ibid.;* H. M. Mendenhall to *id.*, June 25, 1888, *ibid.;* J. G. Rathburn to *id.*, June 25, 1888, *ibid.;* Royal Taylor to *id.*, June 27, 1888, *ibid.;* Col. L. F. Lyttle to *id.*, June 26, 1888, *ibid.;* John W. Lacock to *id.*, June 28, 1888, *ibid.;* S. S. Bucklin to *id.*, June 28, 1888, *ibid.;* C. W. Hammond to *id.*, June 28, 1888, *ibid.;* Owen Wright to *id.*, June 28, 1888, *ibid.;* D. H. Rees to *id.*, July 2, 1888, *ibid.;* Rev. Owen Hicks to *id.*, July 6, 1888, *ibid.;* L. J. Hubble to *id.*, July 6, 1888, *ibid.;* G. W. Beall to *id.*, July 10, 1888, *ibid.;* J. F. White to *id.*, September 12, 1888, *ibid.;* Sidney De Kay to *id.*, September 13, 1888, *ibid.;* C. C. Hart to *id.*, August 18, 1888, *ibid.;* T. N. Springer to *id.*, September 12, 1888, *ibid.;* Harry Taylor to *id.*, October 7, 1888, *ibid.*

[50] Harrison to his wife, June 18, 1864, *ibid.;* J. T. Wright to Harrison, April 9, 1864, *ibid.;* Harrison to Wright, April 27, 1864 (copy), *ibid.;* S. K. Hanyman to Harrison, October 20, 1864, *ibid.*

comradeship of war" would end only with their lives: "The fires in which our friendship was united and welded were too hot for the bond ever to be broken." Then, taking the hand of each, he cordially thanked those Democrats who had come to give him "a comrade's greeting." [51]

Campaign propaganda indicated that both parties attached a high degree of importance to the veterans' vote. But Democrats were at a disadvantage; their low-tariff program rendered it impossible for them to promise costly pension legislation. They publicized Cleveland's assurance to Commander in Chief Rea that he would sign any bill upon which former soldiers could agree, but in the main they confined their arguments to a defense of Cleveland's past policy. The campaign textbook contained a full chapter on Democratic favors to soldiers; emphasis was on the assertion that many G.A.R. posts as well as individual Republican veterans had sanctioned the President's vetoes.[52]

The Democratic press handled an unfortunate situation as best it could. Major attention was given to the refutation of Republican "falsehoods." The Indianapolis *Sentinel*, for example, denied the charge that Democrats were not giving veterans preference in appointments. Asserting that former soldiers had to a large extent retained their jobs, the paper estimated that thousands more veterans were holding office than had been the case under any former administration. It asserted that in the Washington departments eight hundred more servicemen enjoyed appointments than ever before.[53]

The Democratic press used Black's Pension Bureau report as a campaign document. The New York *Herald* pointed out that more special pension acts had been approved under the Democratic administration than under any other, and that 30 per cent of the money disbursed under Cleveland had gone to veterans: "So far from neglecting their interests this administration has shown itself preeminently the soldiers' friend." Cleveland wished

[51] Minneapolis *Tribune*, July 1, September 20, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, September 13, 14, 1888.

[52] Utica *Daily Observer*, August 28, 1888, clipping in Cleveland MSS.; New York *Herald*, September 9, 1888; *Democratic Party*, *Campaign Text Book* (New York, 1888), 268–303; *Harper's Weekly*, XXXII (July 28, 1888), 546.

[53] Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 21, 1888.

only to check the pouring of federal money into the pockets of pension lobbyists and "manifestly unworthy" claimants. The honest soldier was more indebted to him than to any other president. The Indianapolis *Sentinel* wondered how, in the light of Black's figures, "Republican demagogues" could convince any voter that Cleveland or his party was hostile to the soldiers. The paper quoted Grant's bounty-veto message with the comment that a Democrat would have been branded as rebel and traitor for writing it. Resolutely whistling in the dark, the *Sentinel* published letters from soldiers pledging support to Cleveland. Some of them proclaimed that their efforts to win pensions had been futile until the Democrats came into power.[54]

Cleveland himself was proud of his policy toward veterans and reportedly remarked that he could wish no better campaign document than a copy of his veto messages in every G.A.R. post. In July the President included with one of his pension vetoes another defense of his position; this was obviously designed for campaign purposes. He complained that the flood of private bills was setting medical theories "at naught" and was claiming "the most startling relation . . . between alleged incidents of military service and disability or death." The Pension Bureau's decisions were being "overruled in the most peremptory fashion," since most of the claimants had been unsuccessful with that agency before applying to Congress. The general pension laws should be revised, Cleveland stated, "with a view of meeting every meritorious case that can arise." In the meantime, some tribunal should be established to determine the merits of applications. The President would "yield to no man" in a desire to see the nation's defenders liberally treated; "unfriendliness to our veterans is a charge easily and sometimes dishonestly made. . . . I have conceived the prevention of the complete discredit which must ensue from the unreasonable, unfair and reckless granting of pensions by special acts to be the best service I can render our veterans." But if Cleveland thought his position unassailable, he reckoned without the adroitness with which his opponents were able to twist his veto messages.[55]

[54] New York *Herald*, September 9, 1888; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, August 29, September 3, October 12, 16, 1888.

[55] McElroy, *Cleveland, Man and Statesman*, I, 201; Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of Presidents*, VIII, 682–85.

So delighted were Republicans with this issue, indeed, that they well nigh forgot the veteran preference question which had been so important early in Cleveland's administration. Harrison announced in his acceptance letter that "honorable military service should have appropriate recognition" in appointments, while the Republican campaign textbook devoted a full chapter to the charge that Democrats had dismissed Union veterans to make way for Confederates. But journals and speakers almost ignored this point to quote from the chapter comparing the Republican bounty and pension record with that of their opponents. The keynote of the Republican attack was struck at a rally where a heckler pointed out the number of pension acts Cleveland had signed. The speaker replied, "We are not talking about the number of Bills he *has* signed but about the number he has not. . . . You have lost sight of the issue." Blaine, increasingly conscious of the pension question as he moved westward, clutched a pamphlet compilation of the "great vetoer's" messages as he complained to a Detroit audience that each veto seemed a "decision of the commissioner on application for pension under the law." [56]

Republican journals were no less eager to dwell upon the pension vetoes. The Minneapolis *Tribune* doubted whether the President, "alone and unaided," was more likely to "get at the facts" than the "array of talent" on the congressional pension committees. Certainly he had no "legal or moral right" to sneer at the applicants in his veto messages. The paper estimated that because of his insulting comments, 95 per cent of the veterans would vote against him, although fully a fourth had supported him in 1884. Lemon, viciously attacking the administration, announced that he was opposed to Cleveland's re-election solely because he believed it "would be very prejudicial to the best interests of the veterans. . . . There is no politics in this." Assuring former soldiers that with united action they could determine the result of the election, he begged them to defeat their "two arch-enemies," Cleveland and Matson. Private James M. Dalzell, a one-man army crusading for veterans' interests, used his influence for Republi-

[56] Indianapolis *Journal*, September 12, 1888; *Republican Party, Campaign Text Book* (New York, 1888), 168–94; Orcutt, *Burrows of Michigan*, II, 51; Chicago *Tribune*, October 4, 1888; Minneapolis *Tribune*, October 4, 6, 1888.

cans by distributing thousands of circular oaths. Under these, former soldiers pledged themselves to oppose any executive or legislator who had ever failed to support a pension or bounty measure.[57]

The pith of the Republican message was contained in the Minneapolis *Tribune*'s question, "If you were President and a pension bill was laid on your table and there was some shade of doubt in your mind about its justice and the treasury was bursting with $150,000,000 of surplus, would not your human sympathies cause you to give the widow or the old veteran the benefit of the doubt?" Blaine, too, asserted that he introduced the subject of Cleveland's vetoes only to place it vis-à-vis that of the surplus, part of which "might have gone to the poor soldier without endangering the stability of our government." The objection of the independent Washington *Post* that such appeals made of the veterans "floaters on the surface of the political tide, ready to go to the party that will make the highest bid," went unheeded. Hovey sent circulars to Indiana veterans reminding them that "the Mills Tariff bill would leave no surplus to pay our just demands." Even the Chicago *Tribune*, violent opponent of pension legislation because of its tariff views, performed a *volte-face* in an editorial headed, "Give the Surplus to the Soldiers." The connection between the tariff and pension issues was an ever-recurring theme in the Washington *National Tribune*'s columns. For Republicans it was a golden opportunity to win the firm support not only of veterans but of their families and friends.[58]

But the combination was by no means an unmixed blessing to party leaders; some of the lesser nominees were eager to increase their following by promising more than the public would be willing to accept. Even before Harrison's nomination he faced the problem of suppressing those who wished to pledge the party

[57] Minneapolis *Tribune*, August 10, 1888; Washington *National Tribune*, October 25, 1888; Thomas Spratt to Hon. Isaac H. Maynard, August 28, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; "Private Dalzell's Soldier Circular," December 16, 1887, Cleveland MSS.; Dalzell to Cleveland, December 28, 1887, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, undated, *ibid.*

[58] Minneapolis *Tribune*, August 10, October 4, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, August 11, December 9, 1887, July 20, October 4, 1888; Washington *Post*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, V, 409; circular letter signed by Alvin Hovey, October 1, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, June 14, 21, 28, July 5, 12, 19, 26, August 2, 16, 23, 30, September 6, 13, 1888.

to service pensions. At the Indiana Republican convention, delegate Thomas Bennet was prevented at the last moment from introducing a service-pension resolution by Halford, the general's representative, who assured him that it would "embarrass the candidacy of Benjamin Harrison for president." [59]

After Harrison's nomination, the secretary of the Service Pension Association, with President Hovey's sanction, besieged the general with pleas that he recognize the cause in his letter of acceptance. The secretary reminded Harrison that in the "pivotal states" of New York and Indiana, the Grand Army encampments had sanctioned the movement for three years, as had also the Massachusetts Department. The general undoubtedly feared that "Eastern Conservatives" would not approve a positive declaration, yet he need not have felt any alarm, since the demand for service pensions was more intense in Massachusetts and New York than anywhere in the West. An endorsement would bring thousands of votes from those states. It was, indeed, "one of the legitimate means" of ensuring his election. An Ohio officer of the Union Veteran Army, reminding Harrison that his organization supported for office only those who favored service pensions, also requested a "clear statement," adding, "I am asked over and over the question when I try to get Democrats to join our ranks what will Harrison do for us more than Cleveland will?" Others, too, urged that "brave words" on the subject would be a "winning point." [60]

Harrison was convinced that such a statement would alienate more support than it could win. Despite the harmful effects of the Grand Army firebrands' agitation, the public in general was still favorably disposed toward the old soldier. But it was by no means ready to sanction pensions based on service rather than disability. Aware of this, Harrison was complimentary but vague regarding veterans when writing his letter of acceptance. He declared that he was "heartily in sympathy" with the convention's pension declaration. What veterans "gave and what they suffered

[59] Indianapolis *Sentinel*, March 11, 1890, clipping enclosed in letter of Michener to Halford, March 11, 1890, Cleveland MSS.

[60] C. A. Powers to Harrison, June 27, 1888, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, July 6, 1888, *ibid.*; W. B. Hodge to *id.*, July 7, 1888, *ibid.*; E. J. Kenney to *id.*, July 6, 1888, *ibid.*; J. B. Cheadle to *id.*, July 10, 1888, *ibid.*

I had an opportunity to observe and, in a small measure, to experience. They gave ungrudgingly; it was not a trade, but an offering. . . . Without attempting to discuss particular propositions, I may add that measures in behalf of the surviving veterans of the war and of the families of their dead comrades should be conceived and executed in a spirit of justice and of the most grateful liberality. . . ." [61]

In his informal addresses to delegations of soldiers, Harrison adhered to this general promise of "liberal" treatment. On one occasion he announced that it was no time "to use an apothecary's scale to weigh the rewards of the men who saved the country." [62] Undoubtedly the general chose the wiser course. His pledges were too vague to arouse public anxiety; yet they went much further than Democrats dared to go.

In general, Republican journals followed Harrison's lead and ignored service pensions. Emphasizing the wide difference between the two parties' pension planks, they assured the veteran that he had far more to gain from a Republican administration. The Minneapolis *Tribune* put the bargain in bald terms: "The Republican party asks for your assistance, and the assistance of your sons and brothers and promises in return that the veteran who is in age and poverty . . . shall be honestly supported at the cost of the nation." But Hovey was not to be denied his issue. As he toured Indiana with Corporal Tanner, he reminded veterans that he wanted them all to have an eight-dollar pension. Colonel Matson found himself hopelessly outclassed as a "soldiers' friend." [63]

Again the Pension Bureau figured in campaign activities. Republicans charged that in its eagerness to convince applicants of Democratic good will, the agency was overwhelming them with pensions and increases, and that it was threatening cessation of payments should they oppose the administration. Black's successor claimed that the Bureau's files contained "ample evidence . . .

[61] Washington *Tribune*, September 12, 1888; New York *Herald*, September 12, 1888; Indianapolis *Journal*, September 12, 1888; Scrapbook V, Harrison MSS.

[62] "Gems from General Harrison's Speeches," in Walker, *Hovey and Chase*, 196.

[63] Minneapolis *Tribune*, June 22, 1888; circular, untitled, October 1, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, September 22, 1888; Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 28, October 2, 9, 13, 1888.

that . . . a number of special examiners were assigned to duty in New York State for the express purpose of securing the soldier vote for the Democratic Party." These officers, he said, acted on instructions from local committees as well as telegraphed orders from the Bureau "to convene medical boards and cause claimants to be examined, the obvious intention being to extend such favors to those claimants as would secure their votes." [64]

But Republicans were scarcely in a position to make charges. Pension grants to Ohio soldiers were accompanied with notes from Republican congressmen announcing that the administration deserved no credit for the favorable decisions, since Republican influence had produced them.[65]

The offer of the surplus would seem to have been bait enough for the soldier vote and to have canceled any need to stir up war memories. Apparently some Republican politicians were of that opinion; they made few attempts to revive war hatreds on Memorial Day and they actually competed with Democrats in capitalizing on a Gettysburg reunion of two thousand Confederate veterans with survivors of the Army of the Potomac. Republicans worked among Confederate as well as Union veterans; and one man reported: ". . . I found many Confederates who sympathise with us, and will vote with us. . . ." Eastern papers seemed to have forgotten the sectional issue; one might conclude from reading them that the bloody shirt had at long last been buried.[66]

But in the West the situation was different. The Minneapolis *Tribune*, for example, began its "South in the saddle" complaint early in the campaign. Both Democratic candidates, it reminded veterans, had remained aloof from "active support of their country's cause" during its "dark hour." The solid South would have tolerated no Union veteran on the Democratic ticket. It accepted Cleveland because it had learned to use him; it accepted Thurman because his record was a "long life . . . of sympathy for the lost cause." Later the paper announced that in the Democratic caucus,

[64] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 188; Green B. Raum to Harrison, April 18, 1892, Harrison MSS.

[65] James B. Townsend to Lamont, October 19, 1888, Cleveland MSS.

[66] *Harper's Weekly*, XXXII (June 9, 1888), 407; New York *Tribune*, July 3, 12, 1888; New York *Herald*, July 1, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, July 3, 1888; Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 236–62; *Proceedings Colorado Encampments G.A.R.*, 1885, "Address of Commander B. L. Carr," 13; New York *Herald*, May 7, 1888.

the "rebel yell" drowned every patriotic effort to fulfill promises to the soldiers. The *Tribune* gladly published a veteran's letter asserting that his Democratic comrades were voting "against everything they fought for. . . . I do not believe it is best to give the control of this government into the hands of those who fought to destroy it." [67]

The paper had no gracious gesture for the Gettysburg reunion; its reporter on Grand Army news remarked that his comrades could extend the hand of fraternity only with the mental reservation "that we are eternally right and they eternally wrong." An editorial stated that the former Confederates would return from Gettysburg convinced that "the peculiar political methods of the South . . . will not be tolerated any more than slavery was permitted to exist." The use of a Confederate flag at Richmond during a Pickett-monument dedication brought forth an indignant editorial.[68]

The bloody shirt was waved even more vigorously in Indiana, where politicians, fearing the effect of the tariff issue, buried it under renewed attacks on the South. Former Knights of the Golden Circle found themselves on trial for murdering Union soldiers in 1864. Blaine aided the cause by rattling "the dry bones of the late war" when he spoke in Indiana. The Chicago *Tribune*'s tone was comparatively mild compared with its virulence of previous years, but it did assert that Cleveland had refused during the war "to give his support to the doctrine of Nationality and allegiance to the Nation." Thurman, it declared, had been author of the peace plank in the Democratic platform of 1864. Iowa's Republican journals devoted considerable space to war issues. Their correspondents charged the Democratic national convention with disloyalty because it cheered the band's rendition of "Dixie" but gave only feeble response to "America." Cleveland was branded a Copperhead; the boys were urged to "rally 'round the flag" and lead Harrison to victory.[69]

In these efforts to revive flagging wartime hatreds, the veterans'

[67] Minneapolis *Tribune*, June 9, 12, July 30, August 17, 19, 1888.

[68] *Ibid.*, June 24, July 2, October 20, 1888.

[69] New York *Tribune*, September 7, 1888; *Public Opinion*, IV, 569; Washington *National Tribune*, November 3, 10, 1887, January 5, 14, 1888; New York *Herald*, October 11, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, July 3, 19, November 6, 1888; McMurry, "The Soldier Vote in Iowa in the Election of 1888," *loc. cit.*, 349, 353, 355.

idol played a prominent part. General Sherman became so annoyed when Democrats publicized his twenty-four-year-old criticism of Hovey for leaving the army that he wrote a letter for publication. After vindicating the Indiana candidate, he inquired if his opponent had a better military record. "Or was he a stay-at-home or a 'doubting Thomas' ready to submit?" If so, the general averred, a single day's service on Hovey's part was worth more to the country than "a whole lifetime of a growling non-combatant." In October the *North American Review* published Sherman's article, "Old Shady, with a Moral," which attacked the South for suppressing the Negro vote and threatened another war. The general declared, "There is no use talking to me of 'Bloody Shirts'—I have seen enough of them; yea, coats and overcoats ensanguined by the heart's blood of the best men who ever lived. . . . The Northern people will not long permit the Negro vote to be suppressed and yet be counted in the political game *against* them." In response to this article Sherman received numerous enthusiastic letters, a large proportion of them from veterans.[70]

It is interesting to note that in the many campaign songs among Harrison's papers, the emotional appeal to veterans was combined in approximately equal proportions with pension promises. A typical stanza of the latter type ran:

> Let Grover talk against the tariff tariff tariff
> And pensions too
> We'll give the workingman his due
> And pension the boys who wore the blue [71]

Others fastened upon the events of 1887:

> And Grover C. will sorry be, and sorely rue the day
> He undertook to give the rebel-flags away

[70] W. T. Sherman to "M.C.," September 11, 1888, in Chicago *Tribune*, September 22, 1888; C. M. Walker to Sherman, September 5, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.; M. C. Garber to *id.*, September 13, 1888, *ibid.;* Jacob D. Cox to *id.*, October 2, 1888, *ibid.;* W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, November 10, 1887, *ibid.;* letters during October, 1888, *ibid.;* James E. Yeatman to W. T. Sherman, November 6, 1888, *ibid.;* W. T. Sherman to John Sherman, November 8, 1888, *ibid.;* W. T. Sherman, "Old Shady, with a Moral," in *North American Review*, CXLVII (1888), 366.

[71] Clipping from Zanesville (Ohio) *Courier*, July 4, 1888, and song, enclosed in Mrs. Harriet Ross Brown to Harrison, July 13, 1888, with Harrison MSS.

Campaign Broadside, from Harrison MSS., XLV, among November 2, 1888, papers.

Yes Grover he, will sorry be, and long lament, I say,
The fact that he a'fishin' went on Decoration Day.
And Grover C. and Allen T. will find, as all men do,
How vain it is to "buck agin" the boys who wore the blue,—[72]

And still others harped on the war to the tune of "Marching through Georgia."

Grover Cleveland sent a substitute where he did not dare to go,
Into the Union Army to face a rebel foe;
There he left this poor old German to die a death of woe
While he was boasting of our Union's victory.[73]

Again Republicans resorted to their favorite device of playing "Marching through Georgia" and encouraging veterans' reunions. One Republican remarked that there would "be a reunion every *week* until they would drive the Rebel Democracy out of the Land and every Person shall have a Pension that was in the Army working men and all." Throughout the campaign the columns of the Washington *National Tribune* were filled with notices and accounts of soldiers' gatherings. On most of these occasions, the Republican case was stated very subtly; but the speeches in at least one case were so openly partisan that Democratic contributors to the reunion's expenses were outraged. Prominent Republicans hastily apologized.[74]

Republicans used the quiet approach even in their campaign organization; although the Old Soldiers' Harrison and Morton clubs dropped the noisy rallies and parades of former years, they did effective work. The Minneapolis organizer enthusiastically reported that fully one-fourth of his initiates had supported Cleveland in 1884. Indiana's commander confidently expected to bring "into line" four-fifths of "the Ex Soldiers of Indiana—heretofore

[72] Clipping of campaign song, enclosed in Lacock to Harrison, July 17, 1888, *ibid.*

[73] C. W. Leavitt to Harrison, September 25, 1888, with two printed songs enclosed, *ibid.;* see also Harrison MSS., Vols. XXXIII–XLIII; "Old Color Sergeant," undated, Fairchild MSS.; circular, "1888," December 1, 1891, Rusk MSS.

[74] Nelson A. Miles to Sherman, November 12, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Stewart to Lamont, January 9, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; Indianapolis *Sentinel,* August 15, September 14, 20, 26, 1888; I. F. Chapman to Harrison, July 7, 1888, Harrison MSS.; C. S. Aikins to *id.,* July 13, 1888, *ibid.;* James M. Ayers to *id.,* July 13, 1888, *ibid.;* Foraker to *id.,* July 13, 1888, *ibid.*

Democrats." A new organization, the National Veteran Club of the United States, confined its propaganda to high-tariff arguments. It proclaimed that the Mills bill was the first step toward reducing American workingmen to the condition of European-pauper labor.[75]

Democrats followed their custom of organizing campaign clubs, but the societies failed to attain prominence except in Indiana, where diligent workers developed "Matson and Myers" regiments in every county. The Veterans' Rights Union, which might have been expected to agitate against Cleveland, announced that it was fully satisfied with his policy. Joseph W. Kay, prominent leader, praised Cleveland for appointing so many soldiers.[76]

The Grand Army's role in the campaign was not so quiet as its more conservative leaders might have desired. Officers repeatedly assured the public that the organization was nonpolitical and instructed posts to refrain from partisan activities. In July, Commander in Chief Rea issued a reminder that uniforms should not be worn to political rallies. Fairchild had his own peculiar method of warning members against dabbling in politics. At a Grand Army–sponsored reunion in Omaha, he advised his comrades not to discuss Cleveland in their meetings: "There will come a time to talk, and that will be at the polls. Speak out then and let your voice be heard." [77]

[75] F. J. Mead to Harrison, July 16, 1888, Harrison MSS.; John A. M. Cox to *id.*, August 16, 1888, *ibid.;* W. V. Sewell to E. W. Halford, July 15, 1888, *ibid.;* H. Downing to editor, Minneapolis *Tribune,* July 9, 1888; Rusk to H. Brinnell, August 2, 1888, Rusk Letter Books; "Circular No. 1," National Veteran Club of the United States, Washington, "A Few Words to the Working Men of the United States," undated, enclosed in E. W. Whitaker to Harrison, September 6, 1888, Harrison MSS.; "Constitution and By Laws of the National Veteran Club," November 30, 1880, Garfield MSS.; see also Chap. VI, n. 41, *supra.*

[76] R. H. Schireley to Lamont, August 17, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; clipping, Utica *Daily Observer,* August 28, 1888, *ibid.;* H. H. Walthour to Cleveland, October 13, 1888, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune,* November 29, 1888; S. A. Culver to Harrison, July 13, 1888, Harrison MSS.

[77] Chipman to Gen. Edward S. Salomon, March 13, 1888, in *Proceedings 21st Encampment California G.A.R.,* 1888, p. 81; W. H. Webber to Harrison, August 12, 1888, Harrison MSS.; *Journal 22nd National Encampment G.A.R.,* 265; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Maine* (1884–1946), *22nd Encampment,* 1889, p. 29; *Proceedings 23rd Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.,* 1888, p. 58; *Proceedings 44th and 45th Encampments Pennsylvania G.A.R.,* 45; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Minnesota* (1881—disbanded 1947, publication under way March, 1950), *8th Encampment,* 40; Wilcox, "Grand Army of the Republic," *loc. cit.,* 86.

Despite assurances to the contrary, most Grand Army assemblies were quietly managed Republican rallies. One member, inviting Harrison to a gathering in Kansas, remarked: "You understand that the reunion is under the auspices of the Grand Army of the Republic, therefore it is not political in its nature, yet as these meetings go, there is always more or less politics injected into them. . . . at least 50,000 Old Soldiers will be there to honor you, and it will furnish the opportunity to disprove the Democratic claims, that the Old Soldiers are not enthusiastically for you." In the West G.A.R. posts worked openly for Harrison; in the East their support was less obvious. In general, Republican leaders confined their efforts among members to agitation of the pension and tariff issues.[78]

Certainly many Grand Army publications made little effort to conceal their political bias. One paper charged: ". . . several alleged G.A.R. papers are simply strong republican partisan journals masquerading under the name of the G.A.R." The Grand Army Publishing Company, owners of the *Grand Army Review*, asked Harrison for permission to place his picture on the title page of its forthcoming album. The editors planned to include biographical sketches of the general and the vice-presidential candidate as well as the Republican platform. The album, they believed, would be "an excellent campaign Document" for New York, Indiana, Connecticut, and New Jersey. "Every Veteran receiving one will constitute himself a Recruiting officer . . . it will be . . . a potent factor in the . . . campaign." [79]

At the encampment in September, well over a hundred thousand members and their friends crowded into Columbus, Ohio, to send prices soaring. Foraker's home overflowed with governors and other public figures, while the lesser lights were crammed into three mammoth camps which the city had generously supplied with electric lights. Rea had issued a circular reminding members of the society's nonpartisanship principle. He boasted to the

[78] W. M. Hess to Harrison, August 16, 1888, Harrison MSS.; New York *Tribune*, August 26, November 29, 1888; entry for April 25, 1888, in Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, IV, 387; Darwin C. Pavey to Harrison, June 22, 1888, Harrison MSS.

[79] Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 21, 1888; Thomas Bell to Harrison, enclosing broadside, June 26, 1888, Harrison MSS.

convention that not a single violation of the nonpartisanship regulations had been reported to him, but the assembly itself was in many respects a Republican rally. The day of the great parade was warm, and a perspicacious merchant stood along the line of march to supply the boys with palm-leaf fans. Assuming, as Foraker put it, that "their political complexion would be Republican," he had had printed on one side an advertisement of his business and on the other a picture of Harrison. As the columns passed the reviewing stand, "the effect was of just one fluttering picture of Benjamin Harrison after another." Moreover, some of the western delegates carried political banners. After two or three hours, Democratic-candidate Thurman could stand it no longer. Rising angrily, he announced to the surrounding dignitaries, "I supposed that I was asked here to review a nonpolitical gathering, but I find it's nothing but a damned Republican mass meeting." He stalked off, leaving behind an embarrassed silence.[80]

At the evening's principal campfire, silver-tongued General William H. Gibson carefully explained how innocently the incident had occurred and publicly apologized to all who might have been offended. In melting words he reminded his comrades that theirs was not a political army but one of fraternity, charity, and loyalty; when they attended an encampment, they must leave their politics at home. But in his conclusion the general was somehow impelled to honesty. If at such gatherings members should forget themselves and "holler" for anyone, he exhorted, they must be sure to "holler" for Harrison. Long-continued laughter and applause greeted this bit of frankness.[81]

In his welcoming address Governor Foraker showed that he was adept at making his meaning clear while upholding the traditional reunion policy of naming no names. The surplus, he asserted, should be spent on those who had earned it during the war. When he expressed contempt for those who had sent substitutes

[80] Chicago *Tribune*, September 11, 1888; *Journal 22nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 33, 255; "General Orders No. 9," July 6, 1888, circular, enclosed in Fitz-John Porter to Lamont, July 30, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life*, I, 309–11; New York *Tribune*, September 9, 1888.

[81] Foraker, *I Would Live It Again*, 118; Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life*, I, 311; New York *Tribune*, September 15, 1888.

to the field, the audience promptly cried, "Hit him again!" Foraker innocently replied that he was hitting no one.[82]

Less obvious but nonetheless revealing instances arose during the encampment proceedings. Just after the commander in chief finished denouncing a bogus G.A.R. badge bearing Cleveland's likeness, he read a telegram from the President expressing regret at his inability to attend. Possibly because of the close conjunction of the two subjects, the veterans assumed that the telegram represented the same purpose as the campaign badge: a Democratic attempt to use the Grand Army. In any case, the dispatch was received with a torrent of hissing. One delegate cried, "Did he send a substitute?" When investigation revealed the fact that a local committee had invited the President, his answer was sarcastically referred to the committee on pensions.[83]

This committee later did its bit for the Republican cause in Indiana; it placed responsibility for congressional failure to pass a general pension bill squarely upon C. C. Matson, chairman of the House Pension Committee as well as Democratic gubernatorial candidate. If this "most caustic arraignment" ever given in Grand Army circles did not cost Matson his election, remarked the Chicago *Tribune*, "a good many people will be fooled." [84]

The encampment's decision on the pension subject, which occupied the major part of the delegates' attention, indicated that the veterans were in no mood to be satisfied with the negative Democratic position. By an overwhelming vote, the assembly announced that every man who had served in the Union Army at least sixty days should receive eight dollars a month. Although the encampment thus placed the Grand Army at the head of the service-pension movement, it did not withdraw approval for the disability bill still pending before Congress.[85]

Sherman, asked confidentially if he would accept the position of commander, gave an emphatically negative reply. The struggle

[82] Indianapolis *Sentinel*, September 12, 1888.

[83] Chicago *Tribune*, September 13, 14, 1888; New York *Tribune*, September 13, 1888.

[84] Chicago *Tribune*, September 11, 13, 1888; *Journal 22nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 121, 189, 191.

[85] Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 10, 1888.

over the election revolved around efforts of Warner Miller, New York gubernatorial candidate, to gain the position for General N. M. Curtis, who thereby could "beat Cleveland in the State of New York, by using the Grand Army." Democratic delegates concentrated upon defeating Curtis. The convention finally chose William Warner, conservative Republican congressman, inseparable friend of General Sherman, and prominent leader of the Missouri Department ever since its early rollicking partisan days.[86]

As the encampment drew to a close, leaders congratulated themselves upon preventing any open criticism of Cleveland—or, in fact, any official action upon which Democrats might seize as evidence of partisanship. The eagerness of western delegates to stop at Indianapolis on their way to or from Columbus was publicized as a manifestation of the affection with which the boys regarded their prominent comrade.[87]

Leaders of the G.A.R.'s auxiliary organization, the Sons of Veterans, worked zealously for the Republican cause. This society had expanded so rapidly during the two years preceding the campaign that by August, 1888, it boasted 56,472 members. Republicans had high hopes of gaining active support from sons of former soldiers, and especially from those affiliated with the organization. According to the Chicago *Tribune*, the Sons typified "a strong force which is just coming into American politics." Many of these young men would cast their first votes in 1888. The *Tribune* claimed that in 1884 Cleveland had benefited by the appearance at the polls of new voters born during the war to stay-at-home Democrats; Republicans would now have the advantage in appealing to those sired by the newly returned veterans in the years 1865–67. Certainly leaders of the Sons did all they could to press the advantage; they "studiously importuned" members to beware the Democratic party, enemy of their fathers during the war.[88]

[86] Isaiah B. McDonald to Lamont, September 25, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 10, 1888; W. S. McNair to Sherman, July 8, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.

[87] New York *Tribune*, September 9, 15, November 29, 1888; Chicago *Tribune*, September 14, 1888.

[88] *Journal 7th Encampment Sons of Veterans* (Wheeling, W.Va., 1888), 9; Chicago *Tribune*, August 19, 1887; circular, signed by George W. Koontz and

The fact that Harrison, Grand Army member and advocate of a liberal pension policy, opposed a noncombatant and pension-bill vetoer, the connection between the pension and tariff issues, and the charge that Democrats were replacing veterans with southerners gave Republicans an enormous advantage in appealing to veterans. The pension issue was second in importance only to that of the tariff; possibly it became the deciding factor in Cleveland's defeat. Certainly the veterans exercised greater influence than they had in any previous presidential struggle. Harrison won because he pulled New York and Indiana from the Democratic ranks. New York went Republican by a margin of less than fifteen thousand; who can say that the soldiers' ballots were not more influential in turning the balance than the split in the Democratic ranks? In this state, which claimed forty-five thousand pensioners, veterans were particularly excited over the pension question and enthusiastically supported the service-pension movement.[89]

In Indiana, which boasted thirty-eight thousand pensioners, General Hovey had centered his campaign on the pension issue; and it was this emphasis that carried him to victory despite the unpopularity which he reaped for his exclusive and aristocratic attitude. After the election Hovey wrote to Fairchild: ". . . I am certain that in the Western States our comrades have gained the victory. . . . The tariff question in Indiana cut no figure in the election, and our victory was obtained from the 'boys in blue.' " The Chicago *Tribune* gave similar reasons for the Indiana result. The men who in 1884 converted the Democrats' majority of six thousand to a narrower Republican majority were not the "protected working men of the cities" but "the old soldiers and their sons." The Indiana veterans "voted as they shot" to "turn the scale" because of Cleveland's vetoes and because they saw the "Southern Brigadiers . . . bossing the Democratic party." A congressman wrote to Harrison, "It is a conceeded [*sic*] fact that

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W. C. Tarkington, Democratic Union Soldiers' and Sailors' Veteran Association, Indianapolis, January 1, 1889, Cleveland MSS.

[89] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 193–94; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 225; Nevins, *Cleveland*, 423; Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic*, 157; Ida M. Tarbell, *The Tariff in Our Times* (New York, 1911), 180; Arthur Wallace Dunn, *From Harrison to Harding, a Personal Narrative Covering a Third of a Century, 1888–1921* (New York, 1922), 2 vols., I, 8; Bernardo, "The Election of 1888," 311, 341.

the soldier vote saved the State of Indiana to the Republican party." [90]

Similar expressions came from other states. The Illinois Grand Army chaplain told Harrison that the veterans and their sons had been "a tower of strength to the party in Southern Illinois. If they had not, and thus enabled us to make large gains in 'Egypt,' the Republicans of Illinois would be in a sore strait to-day." Iowa's Republican majority was only three-fourths as large as its number of soldier residents, and here, too, the indications were that Republican promises had considerable influence on veterans. From Kansas a newspaper reported to Cleveland, "The Irish and the soldier vote primarily aided in the result. Out of six or seven hundred Grand Army men in this city, a small percentage of them voted for you. This was probably the case in Indiana and New York." As might have been expected, the Washington *National Tribune* boasted that Cleveland's defeat had "unquestionably" been accomplished by the veterans. "They presented a solid front against which he could not break, and proved decisive in the closer states. . . . Had they divided as they did when he was first elected his re-election would have been assured. . . . They have defeated Col. Matson in Indiana. . . ." [91]

It must be remembered, too, that even though the bloody shirt played no prominent part in the campaign, many Republican orators were still harking back to the Civil War in sentimental terms. Men like Burrows of Michigan and Gibson of Ohio pictured the Union soldiers as selfless protectors of the nation who were being insulted and starved by the Democratic administration. The fact that so many of the speakers sincerely believed in the accuracy of their depiction rendered it all the more persuasive. For those civilians not already predisposed to measure all issues against

[90] *Dictionary of American Biography*, IX, 270–71; Hovey to Fairchild, December 21, 1888, Fairchild MSS.; William H. Clark to Harrison, September 15, 1886, Harrison MSS.; T. J. Johnston to *id.*, March 8, 1889, *ibid;* Chicago *Tribune*, November 9, 1888.

[91] F. M. Pickett to Harrison, November 3, 1888, Harrison MSS.; McMurry, "Soldier Vote in Iowa in Election of 1888," *loc. cit.*, 356; letter (closing and signature missing) from office of Abilene (Kans.) *Daily Gazette* to Cleveland, November 11, 1888, Cleveland MSS.; E. A. Scott to Harrison, August 12, 1888, Harrison MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, November 8, 1888.

low-tariff convictions, this emotional appeal may well have been influential.[92]

Democrats, certainly, believed that the Grand Army had made an important contribution to Harrison's victory. Their conviction was aired in the press when General Palmer, the society's first state commander, resigned on the ground that the organization had acted as a political machine throughout the campaign. Palmer, a leading worker in Democratic veterans' societies since he deserted the Republican standard, was disgruntled over his defeat for the Illinois governorship. George W. Koontz of Indiana joined him in asserting that Grand Army activities had contributed to Republican victory, and in organizing a rival society, the Democratic Union Soldiers' and Sailors' Veteran Association. While the Democratic press bristled with "scare-heads" and chuckled with "ghoulish glee" at this threatened disruption of the G.A.R., Republican papers scorned the movement as the spiteful action of disappointed candidates. They suggested that Palmer was merely emphasizing his availability as a Democratic presidential candidate for 1892.[93]

The new society developed rapidly in Indiana and laid plans for a national organization. On New Year's Day Koontz issued a circular to veterans charging that "under the pretext of having a soldier candidate," the G.A.R. had been "prostituted by its designing leaders to political uses." He begged all Grand Army Democrats as well as Democratic nonmember veterans to join the new association. The rival association grew rapidly in the West but never took root in the East, where G.A.R. leaders had prudently refrained from arousing the antagonism of Democratic members.[94]

Veterans, indeed, had been so thoroughly convinced that they

[92] Orcutt, *Burrows of Michigan*, II, 298; Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, IV, 421–22; McMurry, "Soldier Vote in Iowa in Election of 1888," *loc. cit.*, 346–47.

[93] Washington *National Tribune*, December 6, 1888; New York *Tribune*, November 24, 29, 30, 1888; clipping from Atlanta (Ga.) *National*, September 5, 1889, enclosed in S. F. Pettis to Harrison, September 5, 1889, Harrison MSS.; R. B. Hoover to Sherman, November 29, 1888, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Stewart to Lamont, January 9, 1888, Cleveland MSS.

[94] Circular signed by Koontz and Tarkington, Democratic Union Soldiers' and Sailors' Veteran Association, Indianapolis, January 1, 1889, Cleveland MSS.; New York *Tribune*, November 29, 1888.

could expect favors from Harrison that they were little disposed to alienate a friendly administration by joining an antagonistic society. While the *National Tribune* lectured Republicans on the necessity for immediate pension legislation, numerous veterans' appointments, and a cabinet appointment for General Alger, the Grand Army enthusiastically participated in the inauguration ceremonies. Former soldiers, looking hopefully to the new administration for appointments, besieged politicians and Grand Army officers with requests for recommendations. Some posts officially recommended their more prominent members; Arkansas posts were especially determined in urging Powell Clayton for a cabinet position. Ohio's commander informed the President that his department was almost unanimous in hoping Alger would win a cabinet appointment. Many recommendations placed primary emphasis upon veterans' support. "Don't appoint W. B. Ellis post Master," ran one urgent telegram to Harrison, "He is not choice of the old soldiers. Wait until you hear from the G.A.R." Finally the Commander in Chief felt impelled to issue an official warning that the recommendations violated the society's nonpartisan regulations.[95]

Harrison, awake to the necessity of appointing a Union soldier to the cabinet, asked Hayes for suggestions. The first evidence that the President recognized Republican obligations to the soldiers came with the appointment of General John W. Noble, popular G.A.R. member, as secretary of the interior. But so far as veterans were concerned, the office of pension commissioner was far more important. James Tanner—energetic member of the Grand Army pension committee, twice New York Department commander, and close friend of Editor Lemon—pulled all the

[95] Washington *National Tribune*, November 8, 22, December 13, 20, 27, 1888, January 3, 17, 24, 31, February 7, 14, 21, March 7, 14, 1889; *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 217–19; letters, November, 1888—March, 1889, Fairchild MSS.; Noyes, "Ohio G.A.R. and Politics, 1866–1900," *loc. cit.*, 98; J. W. True to Harrison, January 16, 1889, Harrison MSS.; John W. Frey to *id.*, January 16, 1889, *ibid.;* D. Hawkins, Commander Post No. 46, to *id.*, January 16, 1889, *ibid.;* John H. McClure to *id.*, January 20, 1889, *ibid.;* Lewis Simmonds to *id.* (n.d.), *ibid.*, among January, 1889, letters; W. W. Thomas to *id.*, enclosing resolutions of Post No. 29 (n.d.), *ibid.;* Joseph W. O'Neall to *id.*, January 21, 1889, *ibid.;* John R. Tilson, to *id.*, telegram, June 8, 1889, *ibid.;* "Circular Letter No. 3," Kansas City, Mo., March 1, 1889, *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 227.

strings he could to get the position. Grand Army leaders gave him strong support; it was arranged that a group of past commanders in chief should visit Harrison in a body to urge the appointment. Washington claim agents, too, were reportedly demanding the legless "corporal." It was charged that when Republican campaign prospects seemed weak, a group of politicians including W. W. Dudley had agreed with several prominent claim attorneys that in return for the efforts of the latter and of Tanner to win the soldiers' vote, Tanner would receive an appointment. The Washington *National Tribune* rejoiced when the corporal became pension commissioner.[96]

Tanner soon made it clear that he took his party's campaign pledges seriously. He had written to General Sherman, "If I achieve the office, I shall . . . run it on the idea that it is the duty of all of us to assist a worthy old claimant to prove his case rather than to hunt for technical reasons under the law to knock him out. I shall run the office . . . in the full spirit of General Harrison's memorable declaration: It is no time to use the apothecaries' scales when you come to weigh the services of the men who saved the Nation." In a public speech he promised, "I will drive a six-mule team through the Treasury"; and on another occasion he cried, "God help the surplus!" [97]

Tanner discovered that the surplus could be most quickly eliminated by increasing previous pension grants. Rerating many who had not even applied, he sent them thousands of dollars in back pensions. A large share of this distribution went to the bureau's employees. Moreover, as the commissioner reduced the proof necessary to show service disabilities and widened the eli-

[96] Harrison to Hayes, January 22, 1889, Harrison MSS.; Tanner to Fairchild, November 9, 1888, Fairchild MSS.; *id.* to *id.*, December 15, 1888, *ibid.*; *id.* to Sherman, January 5, 1889, W. T. Sherman MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, October 30, 1884, January 21, 1886, March 28, 1889; Tanner to Fairchild, November 9, 1888, Fairchild MSS.; M. Hamilton Hamner to *id.*, December 16, 1888, *ibid.*; Fairchild to Harrison (copy), December 29, 1888, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, February 25, 1889, *ibid.*; T. S. Alexander to Fairchild, February 19, 1889, *ibid.*; Mary Rulkotter Dearing, "Civil War Veterans in Politics" (MS. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1938), 290; Woods, "G.A.R. and Civil Service," *loc. cit.*, 63 n.; New York *Times*, June 19, 1889.

[97] Tanner to Sherman, January 5, 1889, W. T. Sherman MSS.; *Nation*, XLVIII (1889), 438–40; *Public Opinion*, VII, 487–88; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 226.

gibility limits, it became an easy matter to win a pension. Despite the fact that Noble had forbidden any forty-eight-hour cases unless the claimant was destitute or at point of death, the Bureau took a large number out of their regular order and settled them within two days. It was generally reported that many of these "special" claims were those of a "notorious pension attorney." [98]

Soon the press was filled with accounts of Tanner's practices. Democratic newspapers gleefully seized upon his acts and made them the principal point in their attack upon the administration. Republican papers at first defended Tanner; but when they realized that he was discrediting the party, many wavered in their support. But criticism only spurred the commissioner to further indiscretions, and Secretary Noble finally inaugurated an investigation.[99]

Called to account, Tanner was insubordinate and announced that in pension matters he was the secretary's superior. Only the commissioner, he announced, had the power to "call a halt." Noble, already irritated by Tanner's insolence over appointments, could not countenance this attack on his authority. In a twenty-four-page letter he made a studied effort to avoid "personally offensive" language, but he left no doubt regarding his relationship to the officers of his department. Tanner's continued association with W. W. Dudley, whose openly corrupt campaign methods in Indiana had discredited him with Harrison, further alienated the commissioner from the administration. But Harrison's correspondence indicates that the real element in Tanner's downfall was the fact that Noble could no longer tolerate him in the official family.[100]

Rumors that Tanner would be asked to resign created conster-

[98] John W. Noble to Harrison, July 24, 1889, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to Tanner, undated, copy enclosed in Noble to Harrison, July 24, 1889, *ibid.;* Atlanta *Constitution,* quoted in *Public Opinion,* VII, 46; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 205.

[99] *Public Opinion,* VII, 46, 76, 118, 267, 446–48; House Executive Document 360, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior on the Investigation of the Administration of Commissioner Tanner,* 51 Cong., 1 Sess.

[100] Tanner to Fairchild, May 25, 1889, Fairchild MSS.; Noble to Tanner, undated, copy enclosed in Noble to Harrison, July 24, 1889, Harrison MSS.; Michener to *id.,* September 17, 1889, *ibid.;* Indianapolis *Sentinel,* October 31, 1888; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 199–213; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions,* 226–28.

nation among Republican politicians, especially in Ohio and Indiana. Governor Foraker wired that sentiment in Ohio was "all with" Tanner; his removal "would injure us greatly." The chairman of Indiana's Republican committee presented so black a picture of the political consequences that he managed to effect a "temporary adjustment" of the differences between Noble and Tanner. His hope was to postpone the inevitable break until after the fall elections.[101]

During this lull and in the midst of the investigation, the Grand Army held its national encampment at Milwaukee. Harrison and Noble reportedly hoped that the commissioner would not attend because they feared he might commit the administration to service pensions. Assistant Secretary Cyrus Bussey carefully explained to some fifty selected encampment leaders the administration's version of the Tanner imbroglio, while George Merrill of the organization's pension committee addressed a similar group in the hope of forestalling antiadministration resolutions. Despite Merrill's urgent appeal to stay away, Tanner appeared at Milwaukee and made a speech defending his policy regarding widows' pensions. When resolutions were offered thanking the President for Tanner's appointment, endorsing his work, and condemning his detractors, the commissioner requested that they be withdrawn as inopportune. After a long debate the encampment accepted milder resolutions expressing gratitude for Tanner's appointment and confidence in his integrity.[102]

The Noble-Tanner truce was destined to be short-lived; it could not even survive the October elections. When rumors of the break crept into the press, Indiana's Republican chairman sent excited warnings to the White House. A "compulsory resignation" would lead the rank and file to believe that the administration condemned "the policy of treating the soldier with generosity." Tanner was personally known to thousands of Indiana soldiers, who trusted him, and his dismissal would "make the task of 1890 far more difficult." The chairman gloomily hoped that Harrison

[101] Foraker to Harrison, telegram, August 3, 1889, Harrison MSS.; Michener to *id.*, September 17, 1889, *ibid.*; *id.* to Halford, October 12, 1890, *ibid.*

[102] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 210; George S. Merrill to Harrison, September 30, 1889, Harrison MSS.; *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 163–65; Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, VII, 486.

had "carefully counted the cost," not only in Indiana but also in Ohio, where Republicans were in danger and where the resignation would undoubtedly cause trouble. Governor Hovey wired a plea that the removal be delayed, while reports of Foraker's resentment reached Harrison via the press. Lemon, Dudley, Ingalls, General Butler, and Private Dalzell stoutly defended the commissioner. Nevertheless, the President promptly accepted the corporal's resignation of September 12, assuring him that his personal honesty was not impugned.[103]

Immediately the Indiana chairman took pains to school Governor Hovey and Lieutenant Governor Ira J. Chase in the administration's point of view; both were prominent participants in all Indiana reunions and could do much to placate the boys. Hovey feared that the dismissal would drive many former Democrats from the Republican camp, but Chase reported in late September that the excitement was abating. The bitterness that remained was directed against Noble rather than Harrison. The President received assurances from several sources that a prompt appointment would do much to "heal the wound," but no one seemed eager to assume the task of reversing the "corporal's" indiscreet generosity. Finally, after William Warner and George Merrill refused, Green B. Raum of Illinois accepted the post.[104]

Under Raum's quieter methods, the opposition journals' interest in the Pension Bureau waned, but the merry work of eliminating the surplus proceeded unabated. Although Raum's spending policy was more in conformity with the law than Tanner's had been, it was equally effective. The Democratic press had little to say on that score, but it later publicized the commissioner's personally dishonest conduct of the office. He sold worthless stock to his

[103] Michener to Halford, September 10, 1889, Harrison MSS.; Hovey and Lyman N. Humphrey to Harrison, September 12, 1889, *ibid.;* Wallace and others to Harrison, telegram, September 12, 1889, *ibid.;* Michener to Harrison, September 17, 1889, *ibid.;* Chicago *Herald,* quoted in *Public Opinion,* VII, 485; Washington *National Tribune,* September 19, 1889; New York *Tribune,* September 13, 1889.

[104] Ira J. Chase to Halford, September 21, 1889, Harrison MSS.; Michener to *id.,* September 24, 1889, *ibid.;* *id.* to *id.,* September 25, 1889, *ibid.;* *id.* to *id.,* September 15, 1890, *ibid.;* Noble to Harrison, September 18, 1889, *ibid.;* Michener to *id.,* September 17, 1889, *ibid.;* Butler to *id.,* September 24, 1889, *ibid.;* Tanner, telegram, to *id.,* September 20, 1889, *ibid.;* Merrill to *id.,* September 30, 1889, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune,* September 17, 19, 21, 26, October 19, 20, 1889.

employees and based his promotions on these investments. When Lemon requested a change in claim adjudication that would benefit him, Raum accepted his subordinates' advice and refused. Only after Lemon declined to lend the commissioner money did the latter institute the desired system. The next day Lemon endorsed Raum's note for twelve thousand dollars. These scandals eventually led to his resignation.[105]

Veterans expected prompt payment of Republican campaign promises. At the national encampment in August, 1889, the Grand Army pension committee reported that it had prepared both a disability and a service-pension bill; and it expressed confidence, in view of the "cordially friendly attitude of the Administration," that Congress would soon pay the nation's debt to its defenders. Harrison advocated a dependent pension bill in his first annual message, and the Fifty-first Congress discussed several measures. Many in the House urged service pensions; some insisted that the party had committed itself to such legislation. One member cried, "Deny it if you wish, forget it if you can, but the fact remains that it was the position taken by the Republican party in the pension question that gave to that party the Presidency in 1888 and its present control of both Houses of Congress." But the Senate hoped to appease the veterans by less costly methods.[106]

While Republicans discussed means of fulfilling campaign promises, the former soldiers increased their agitation. They were spurred on by the Washington *National Tribune*, which divided its attention between arguments for a continued protective tariff and persistent demands for immediate pension legislation. Certain Republican "soldiers' friends" who proclaimed that their program was more liberal than that of the administration were equally vehement. Prominent among these was the new Grand Army commander in chief, General Alger, who was encouraging the boys to demand service pensions as part of his campaign to achieve the presidency in 1892. Another important agency in making them "impatient and excited" was the Service Pension Association,

[105] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 213, 222, 225; C. K. Davis to Harrison, May 28, 1891, Harrison MSS.

[106] *Journal 23rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 121; Joseph D. Taylor, in *Cong. Record*, 51 Cong., 1 Sess., April 30, 1890, p. 4055; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 231–33.

which continued educating the veterans to "demand largely of . . . Congress and to expect that their demands would be complied with." [107]

Under all this prodding, one observer reported, "the soldier has talked so much about this matter and has so many friends that he has created a sentiment in favor of very liberal pension legislation." The farmer would forget all about the tariff if politicians would stop talking about it, "but the soldier won't forget and won't quit talking." Harrison received assurances that unless Congress passed a liberal bill quickly, the Democrats would sweep the country in 1890.[108]

In Indiana, where Governor Hovey was "making it a special hobby" to contrast "his position with the President's," the situation threatened to get completely out of hand. Some three hundred delegates of the Indiana Service Pension Association, meeting in Indianapolis concurrently with the state's Grand Army encampment, heard their leaders denounce the administration "without stint." One urged that veterans vote for no one from "township trustee to Congressman" unless he supported service pensions, while another shouted, "We have been political damned fools just long enough." The angry delegates sanctioned Hovey's service-pension program and demanded that congressmen fulfill their campaign promises.[109]

The excitement spread to Grand Army councils, and members expressed "intense bitterness" against the administration for failing "to take a pronounced step in advance." If Harrison would point the way, it was believed, Congress would follow. So general was this feeling that when the President's name was mentioned in secret or public session, "it often met with no applause." Commander in Chief Alger's pronouncement favoring service pensions served as "a firebrand that touched off the tinder box, and occasioned some rather warm expressions." One observer wrote, "I

[107] Washington *National Tribune,* October 17, 31, November 7, 14, 21, 28, December 7, 14, 19, 26, 1889, January–June, 1890; Moses G. McLain to Halford, March 15, 1890, Harrison MSS.

[108] Black to Halford, April 3, 1890, Harrison MSS.; M. L. Bundy to *id.*, March 11, 1890, *ibid.;* Stanton J. Peele to *id.*, March 15, 1890, *ibid.*

[109] Peele to Halford, March 15, 1890, *ibid.;* clipping from Indianapolis *Sentinel,* March 11, 1890, enclosed in Michener to Halford, March 11, 1890, *ibid.*

. . . never before saw so large and intelligent a body of men so feverish as was this one. The smallest break would have called forth a storm. . . ." [110]

Harrison's supporters did all they could to quell the excitement and succeeded in keeping much of it out of the press, but they were seriously worried. One wrote, "I am not easily stampeded, but I am alarmed by the unanimous feeling exhibited on this question. Unless this Congress takes a very radical step forward on the pension question, the Democrats will whip the life out of us in this State this year. . . . What is true of Indiana seems to me to be equally true of many other sections of the country. I have been mingling with Grand Army of late in several of the States, and the sentiment seems to be the same everywhere." State Republican Chairman L. T. Michener sent Harrison excited reports that the "service pension sentiment" was "about five thousand feet thick," and requested fellow-observers to send their views to the White House. These reports all warned that unless Congress passed some sort of service bill, there would be "trouble ahead." [111]

But if administration supporters longed to take the wind from the sails of the "soldiers' friends" by topping their bids for favor, Harrison had to give ear also to the rising public dissatisfaction with governmental extravagance. The President's secretary wrote to Chairman Halford, "It is not political safety to fly in the face of a sentiment that is rapidly developing and not apply this to the service pension sentiment as well as to the demand for the expenditures in other directions." Michener had to quiet his anxiety as best he could by persuading the boys that they must be satisfied with "compromise or half way measures until the way" was "made clear" for more "radical" legislation.[112]

The bill passed by Congress and signed by Harrison in June,

[110] Michener to Halford, March 14, 1890, *ibid.;* McLain to *id.*, March 15, 1890, *ibid.*

[111] McLain to Halford, March 15, 1890, *ibid.;* Charles F. Griffin to *id.*, March 15, 1890, *ibid.;* Michener to *id.*, March 11 (two letters), 1890, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, March 14, 1890, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, March 17, 1890, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, March 22, 1890, *ibid.; id.* to McLain, March 14, 1890, *ibid.;* Peele to *id.*, March 15, 1890, *ibid.*

[112] Quoted in Michener to Halford, March 17, 1890, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, March 22, 1890, *ibid.*

1890, fell short of being a "service" measure in just one respect; applicants must show some disability, regardless of origin. If the claimant could provide certification that he was unable to perform manual labor, he was entitled to $144 a year, whether rich or poor. Henceforth a veteran's widow need not prove that the cause of her husband's death originated in military service. Since the act required only ninety days of service and an honorable discharge, it was in reality a system of social insurance for the benefit of a particular class. Veterans filed their claims with alacrity, and pension agents were momentarily happy. The ease with which the grants were won under the new law and the new pension administration was reflected in the sharp decline of special acts passed by Congress.[113]

The measure took from sixty to seventy million dollars from the Treasury annually, and by 1907 had cost the government over a billion dollars. Thus did Republicans square their debt for veterans' support. The public, aroused by Democrats, evinced considerable unwillingness to pay the bill. Undoubtedly this dissatisfaction contributed to Republican defeat in the 1890 congressional elections.[114]

Republicans received but scant thanks from veterans, who were busily formulating new demands. The Grand Army encampment of 1890 expressed gratitude, it is true; and its pension committee declared, "While not just what we asked, it is the most liberal pension measure ever passed by any legislative body in the world, and will place upon the rolls all of the survivors of the war whose conditions of health are not practically perfect." The committee rejoiced also that those who would administer the law had promised to give it liberal construction. But at the same time the encampment did not forget to repeat its demand for service pensions.[115]

The veterans' press immediately increased its agitation for serv-

[113] Michener to Halford, July 10, 1890, *ibid.;* Glasson, *History of Military Pension Legislation in the United States,* 122; Nevins, *Cleveland,* 330.

[114] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 227–46; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions,* 232–35, 236–38; *id.,* "The National Pension System as Applied to the Civil War and the War with Spain," in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Philadelphia, 1890–), XIX (1902), 216–18; *id., History of Military Pension Legislation in the United States,* 116.

[115] *Journal 24th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 1890, pp. 169, 235–64.

ice pensions. The Washington *National Tribune* cried, "Let us now gird up our loins for a vigorous battle for the remainder of our rights . . . the Prisoners of War Bill, the Repeal of the Limitation to Arrears, the Equalization of Bounties, and the *National Tribune* Per Diem Service Pension Bill." The Indianapolis *American Tribune* threatened that soldiers would desert the Republicans in 1892 unless they granted service pensions; the Boston *Grand Army Record* and the Worcester *Veteran* displayed equally aggressive attitudes.[116]

Veterans' journals also showed greater determination in the matter of servicemen's appointments. In this they were seconded by the G.A.R., which demanded the widening of Section 1754 to include not only disabled but all veterans. Apparently the old soldiers regarded Harrison's modification of the civil-service rules to permit reinstatement of dismissed veterans and their widows scarcely worthy of notice. The Union Veterans' Union, which by 1891 had spread to nine states, belligerently demanded rigid enforcement of the preference law as well as an immediate service-pension measure. After years of prodding by "soldiers' friend" politicians and pension agents, some in the rank and file were so thoroughly aroused that the generous Republican pension law seemed but the first payment on a long-overdue obligation.[117]

[116] Washington *National Tribune*, June 26, 1890; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 27, 1890, July 17, 1891; Boston *Grand Army Record*, issues 1890–92; Worcester *Veteran*, July, 1891.

[117] Boston *Grand Army Record*, July, August, September, 1891; Washington *National Tribune*, February 26, July 30, 1891; *Journal 25th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1891, p. 59; New York *Tribune*, March 27, 1897.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Crusade Against Anarchy

THE YEAR 1890 was a year of soldiers' victory; in that year the Grand Army, boasting 427,981 members, reached the climax of its power. Flushed with success in the pension movement, the organization diverted some of its attention from legislative demands to other activities. The G.A.R. had already launched a crusade for the inculcation of patriotism, particularly in the schools; and after 1890 the society hurled itself into this campaign with increased fervor.

In the late 1880's the Grand Army had begun to agitate for the inauguration of patriotic exercises and the teaching of only "loyal" history in the schools. In part this movement was connected with the campaign to keep veterans before the public as the nation's saviors in order to win popular assent to pension legislation. A Maryland member declared to his encampment: ". . . we deserve a better recognition, and to get it we must . . . see that the rising as well as the present generation are taught that treason is odious and loyalty honorable. . . . We claim that this nation and the rising generation shall be taught that loyalty was triumphant in the late war, and that the Grand Army of the Republic, composed of men who gained that victory, shall have the respect that is due for the services they rendered." [1]

History did not become a required study in the public-school curriculum until after the Civil War, but by 1880 it was a common requirement for teachers' certification. Early in 1884 the Indiana Grand Army encampment, complaining that Indianapolis schools neglected the Civil War period in their history instruc-

[1] *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Maryland, G.A.R.* (1882–1918), *14th Encampment*, 1890, p. 42; *Journal 24th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 161.

tion, pronounced this indifference insulting to the dead and scarcely flattering to the surviving heroes. It requested the state's school boards to see that children received a "clear view" of the causes and "happy results" of the war. The Washington *National Tribune* immediately assumed that this criticism might be applied to many other places and declared, "This ought not to be." [2]

But veterans displayed no interest in the matter; and it did not again arise until 1886, when a Wisconsin post appointed a committee to examine a textbook used in the state's public schools. As a result of this group's report, the post complained to the state encampment early in 1887 that the text was "unreliable, and was written more with the purpose of finding a market . . . in that portion of our country lately in rebellion . . . than with the purpose of recording the facts of history." The post submitted a resolution declaring that all Wisconsin posts should assume the duty of agitating for the book's exclusion from schools. The encampment appointed a committee to investigate the matter.[3]

This committee interpreted its duties broadly and studied a number of histories used in both sections. It concluded that those used generally in the North, striving for impartiality in meeting the requirements of a national educational system, had made such concessions to the South that the student could not comprehend "which was right and which was wrong." As for Southern texts, the committee found that such works as Davidson's *School History of South Carolina* and Alexander H. Stephens' *War between the States* taught a "thoroughly rank, partisan system of sectional education." The report asserted, "It is time that a broad, comprehensive, constitutional, Union-loving patriotism should be taught in our common schools."

The encampment approved the report and appointed a committee headed by General Fairchild to present it to the national encampment. Moreover, it voted to send copies to all Grand Army headquarters and every teachers' association in the country. Accompanying these copies went requests for co-operation in checking the use of textbooks that failed to laud the northern

[2] Bessie Louise Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History in the United States* (New York, 1926), 13–29; *Journal 5th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 1884, p. 307; Washington *National Tribune*, March 13, 1884.

[3] *Proceedings 21st Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 85.

position. Accordingly the department printed ten thousand copies of the report and distributed them among G.A.R. posts, educational institutions, and newspapers. General Fairchild presented the Wisconsin report at the national encampment of 1888, which was sufficiently impressed to order it printed in the convention's official proceedings.[4]

Thus publicized, the idea soon spread to other departments. A Nebraska committee reported that although northern publishers and authors catered "to a disloyal sentiment in the South," that section used its own books, which went even further in upholding nullification and secession. The committee admitted the reason for its alarm: "There is no wonder that in many sections of our land there is a growing aversion among the younger element . . . to the veterans. . . ." The Vermont encampment urged the state's school authorities to use only works that "plainly set forth those principles as were in controversy in the war . . . and at least a fair account of the part taken in the contest by the Union soldiers. . . ." The Washington *National Tribune*, the Topeka *Western Veteran*, and the Indianapolis *American Tribune* were among the soldiers' journals that seized the cue with the plaint that southern textbooks were treasonable.[5]

It was not until after 1890, however, that the organization began moving upon the publishers with determination. The national encampment of 1891 resolved that the society's mission "should be to have correct history of the late war taught to the youth in our public schools, North and South." At the next encampment one committee complained that while textbooks "slandered" the Union cause and deprecated the value of its troops, many northern newspapers and magazines helped to popularize the view that the North was "but partly right"; it had become necessary to "reinstruct" the nation's youth as to the righteousness of the Union cause. Another committee reported that the desire for a national sale had led publishers to "omit, gloss over, and even to mis-

[4] *Proceedings 22nd Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 57–65, 159–61; *Journal 22nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 210–15.

[5] *Journal 12th Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 1888, p. 91; *13th Encampment*, 1889, pp. 61–64; *Journal 22nd Encampment Vermont G.A.R.*, 1889, p. 48; *Journal 12th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 176; Topeka (Kans.) *Western Veteran*, quoted in Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 28, 1892; Washington *National Tribune*, September 25, 1890.

represent" the facts and declared that the Grand Army was duty-bound to "see that alike in the schools of the North and the South, the true story of the great war . . . is made one of the most prominent . . . courses of study." [6]

Closely connected with this insistence upon "loyal" history was the campaign to place an American flag atop schoolhouses and in classrooms. In 1888 a New York school trustee began presenting flags to schools, and Lafayette Post, G.A.R., adopted the idea. The post presented a flag to the College of New York and later donated many others to schools. Soon other posts in the state followed suit; in 1889 Commander in Chief William Warner praised them highly. Pupils should learn from the flag, he declared, "the story of liberty as exemplified in the life of Washington, Lincoln, Grant, and the patriotic sons of the Republic, who by their valor, suffering and death, rendered the imperishable fame of this illustrious trio possible." Under the encampment's instructions, he requested each post to present every public school within its vicinity with a flag. Immediately department headquarters began encouraging posts to do likewise and urging state legislatures to provide funds for flags. Commander in Chief Alger expressed pleasure in 1890 at the large number of flags floating over schools throughout the country.[7]

The boys took this duty very seriously. When Chicago members learned that directors of an Illinois school district had forbidden the daughter of a soldier killed on the field to place a flag before her tiny schoolhouse, their indignation knew no bounds. Chicago and Rockford comrades joined to buy a flag and plan

[6] *Journal 25th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 275; *26th Encampment*, 80, 207.

[7] Lafayette Post No. 140, Department of New York G.A.R., *Ceremony of Flag Presentation to Columbia University of the City of New York, May 2, 1896 and May 7, 1898, by Lafayette Post* (New York, 1899), 105; George H. Thomas Post No. 4, Department of New York, G.A.R., *Presentation of National Flags to the Public Schools of the City of Rochester on Washington's Birthday, 1889, in the City Hall, by George H. Thomas Post* (Rochester, 1889), 9 ff.; *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 80, 207; *Proceedings 23rd Encampment Maine G.A.R.*, 1890, p. 42; *Journal 14th Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 1890, p. 37; *Proceedings 10th Encampment Minnesota G.A.R.*, 87; *Proceedings 24th Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 136, 146; *Proceedings 12th Encampment Missouri G.A.R.*, 149; *California G.A.R. Proceedings*, 1890, p. 4; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Oregon* (1883–1937), *9th Encampment*, 18; *Journal 24th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 10.

an elaborate flag-raising ceremony for the schoolmistress. "I don't know of any penalty attached to raising an American flag over an American schoolhouse," remarked one of them, "and I guess the G.A.R. has as good a right [as] anyone to assist therein." Prepared for any "trouble" that might arise, the boys moved on the little town. They found that the directors, startled by the Grand Army project, had quietly raised their own flag the preceding day. The undaunted comrades proclaimed that the victory was nonetheless theirs and selected another site for their dedication ceremony.[8]

Commander in Chief Fairchild, addressing the Connecticut Department in 1887, praised the loyalty "that asks no questions" and remarked, "Our country, may she always be right; but our country, right or wrong. And friends, that is the kind of loyalty that we instil into the minds of our children." By 1890 the organization as a whole was insisting upon the inculcation of patriotic doctrines through exercises and ceremonies. In that year George T. Balch, auditor of the New York City Board of Education, published his *Methods of Teaching Patriotism in the Public Schools*. Among the emotional methods of teaching loyalty which this book advocated were flag salutes. At the same time the *Youth's Companion* was conducting a nationwide essay contest for school children on "The Patriotic influence of the American Flag when raised over the American schools." Grand Army posts and departments enthusiastically assumed leadership in this movement. Posts had long invited children to participate in Memorial Day exercises; department officials began urging extension of this practice. The Oregon encampment demanded legislation requiring that the "Star Spangled Banner" be sung at least weekly in all the state's schools. Veterans' journals emphasized the necessity for instilling loyalty, and the *American Tribune* praised Balch's book highly. In 1890 the Veterans' Patriotic League appeared.[9]

[8] Chicago *Tribune*, July 23, August 3, 1892.

[9] *Connecticut G.A.R. Encampments 1867–1881*, 80; George Thatcher Balch, *Methods of Teaching Patriotism in the Public Schools* (New York, 1890), 14–73, 78; *Journal 15th Encampment Maryland G.A.R.*, 1891, p. 13; *Proceedings 26th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 1892, pp. 112, 202; *Proceedings 9th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, 1890, p. 43; *Indianapolis American Tribune*, March 6, 1891; Boston *Grand Army Record*, November, 1890, February, 1892; Worcester *Veteran*, December, 1891.

The following year the national encampment joined the movement when Commander in Chief W. G. Veazey, on motion of the Kansas Department, appointed a committee "to devise plans to insure the successful inauguration of some systematic plan of teaching the lessons of loyalty to our one country and one flag. . . ." The new commander, Captain John Palmer, urged his comrades to impress patriotism on the public by rising with bared heads at the opening bars of the "Star Spangled Banner." [10]

By 1892 the Grand Army had definitely assumed leadership in the movement. The national encampment's committee on patriotism recommended that pupils sing stirring songs daily and praised the suggestion of the *Youth's Companion* that children's debating societies, composed especially of veterans' sons, be organized to discuss patriotic subjects. Finally, it advised that the anniversaries of Lincoln's birth and of the emancipation proclamation be made national holidays. The delegates displayed considerable interest in the subject; Indiana members had brought a banner inscribed, "Teach Patriotism in the Public Schools." The encampment officially urged that schools devote one day yearly to patriotic exercises and accepted a suggestion that the organization sponsor a students' celebration of the four-hundredth anniversary of America's discovery. A delegate proudly boasted that the Grand Army's new interest would have "a great influence upon the future of the country." [11]

President Harrison co-operated in plans for celebrating the anniversary of the discovery of America by proclaiming it a general holiday. The G.A.R., aided by the *Youth's Companion*, made the day a patriotic festival for school children. In New York City, an army of 10,500 pupils paraded, while throughout the country, posts sent delegations to participate in school exercises. Superintendents and teachers assured the celebration's national committee that the movement "left a profound impression upon

[10] *Journal 25th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 275–77; *Proceedings 3rd Encampment Missouri G.A.R.*, 18; Worcester *Veteran*, December, 1891.

[11] *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 64, 80–82, 256–61, 280; *Proceedings Encampments New Hampshire G.A.R.*, 1892, p. 190; Charles A. Foster, *History of the G.A.R., Department of Delaware, with Special Mention of the Department of Maryland, 1881–1893* (Wilmington, 1893), 135; Chicago *Tribune*, September 22, 1892.

the public schools" and that no such intensity of feeling had been experienced since the close of the war.[12]

Several Grand Army departments adopted the plan of the American Flag Association of Chicago to make June 14 a national flag day. National headquarters sanctioned the idea and urged members to interest children in celebrating the date; by 1894 the boys were winning general observance of the day. In 1896 Mark Hanna was to capitalize on the Grand Army's enthusiasm for the idea by calling a special "flag day" for those who sympathised with the "cause of honest money." [13]

As the campaign for loyalty developed, the Grand Army placed renewed emphasis upon jingoism, displayed increased interest in economically conservative doctrines, and demanded that the flood of "foreign" immigration be checked. The society's committee on patriotism urged the exclusion of those who represented "the poverty and the crime of other lands," while the Washington *National Tribune* fulminated against the admission of foreign radicals, who were allying with "copperheads and ex-rebels, for venomous warfare against the soldiers in the direct interest of Free Beer, Free Whisky, Free Tobacco and Free Trade." These "cormorant Jews and vampire Gentiles" were banding together "for an assault upon the veterans . . . and upon the carefully nurtured industries. . . ." The veterans' press also encouraged jingoistic attitudes, especially against Great Britain.[14]

The result of the Grand Army's attack on southern textbooks was a renewed crusade against the Ghost of the Confederacy. Scattered instances of animosity occurred through the 1880's; during 1889 and 1890 the organization joined the *National Trib-*

[12] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, August 11, October 20, 1892; Horace S. Crowell to Cleveland, May 16, 1893, Cleveland MSS.; New York *Tribune*, October 11, November 21, 1892; Chicago *Tribune*, October 11, 1892; Boston *Grand Army Record*, June, September, 1892.

[13] *Proceedings 28th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 174; *Journal 21st Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, 18; *22nd Encampment*, 15; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 20, 1894, June 11, 1896; Chicago *Tribune*, June 14, 1894; see also Chap. XII, *infra*.

[14] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, November 20, 1891; *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 67, 82; Washington *National Tribune*, August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, September 13, 1888, August 8, October 17, 1889, July 31, August 7, December 11, 1890, January 15, 22, April 23, June 4, September 10, November 12, December 31, 1891, January 21, July 28, 1892.

une in giving wide currency to evidences of a "treasonable" spirit in the South. The Pennsylvania Department, for example, protested against the revival of the race problem by "ex-Confederates." While Democrats were encouraging "blue and gray" reunions as a symbol of restored good feeling, many Grand Army men became increasingly vocal in their objections to suggestions that they meet "with ex-rebels organized as ex-rebels." This sentiment was not sweetened by occasional counter-blasts from the South. Thomas L. Rosser, for example, told a reunion of Confederate veterans at Baltimore, "I am tired of Gettysburg Reunions and 'blue and gray' lovefests which politicians are holding, while old Sherman threatens in his 'Old Shady stories' and others dare to call the loyal citizens of the South 'traitors.' I feel that I am, and I believe that every brave Confederate soldier living today is, more loyal to the Constitutional Government of the new United States than are the rank and file of the Grand Army of the Republic (so-called), and I believe that we have more affection and are more loyal to the flag of the new Union than they." On the other side of the fence many Grand Army men refused to attend joint gatherings. Sherman, somehow, was always too busy to accept invitations to meet with his former enemies and refused permission to use his name on the ground that it would lead to "endless correspondence." [15]

A project for a mammoth "blue and gray" reunion at the Chicago World's Fair led to so much opposition from Union veterans that the idea was abandoned. The *National Tribune* disgustedly declared, "In view of the repeated manifestations of the veterans' inveterate hostility toward these maudlin affairs, it is amazing that certain shallow sentimentalists and blatant politicians will continue to try to force the survivors of the Union army into them." [16]

[15] Washington *National Tribune,* February 8, 25, March 28, May 9, 23, June 13, December 13, 1889, February 27, June 5, September 18, December 4, 1890, September 24, November 5, 12, 26, 1891; Indianapolis *American Tribune,* March 7, 1890; *Proceedings Encampments Department of Pennsylvania G.A.R.* (1873–1939), *1890 Encampment,* 252; J. H. Tourgee to Sherman and appended note by Sherman, February 13, 1889, W. T. Sherman MSS.; George Moorman to *id.,* March 7, 1889, *ibid.*

[16] Washington *National Tribune,* April 9, June 11, 18, September 24, 1891; Resolutions of Lookout Post, Noblesville, Ind., September 5, 1891, in Indianapolis *American Tribune,* September 18, 1891; Buck, *Road to Reunion,* 239–40, 256, 260–62.

The ire of Grand Army men soon became concentrated in an attack upon the exhibition of the Confederate flag at these assemblies. In 1890 the national encampment demanded laws prohibiting display of the Confederate flag. One delegate even requested that the uniforms of postmen be changed from gray to blue so that veterans need not wear the rebel colors. An incensed Grand Army post officer penned a protest to the President after reading that Confederate flags had waved at the dedication of a Lee monument. This "rebellious spirit" was an insult to Union veterans and should be crushed; if the regular army could not do it, the Grand Army should be called upon: "I assure you they to a man Stand ready to go to the front, and are even more loyal than from 1861 to 1865. . . . unless this kind of business is stopped and the Republican Senate Congress and press raise their voices, and by actions show they are not pandering to the disloyal South Seven hundred thousand ex soldiers votes will be withheld from that party. . . ." [17]

In 1891 Commander in Chief John Palmer issued an order prohibiting members from participating in any demonstrations where "the emblem of treason" was exhibited. "A Comrade wearing the badge or uniform of the Order and participating in any demonstration where the 'Rebel' Flag is displayed, violates his obligation 'to maintain true allegiance to the United States of America' . . . and brings disgrace upon the order of which he is a member." The agitation over textbooks as well as the attacks of the veterans' press on the "Confederacy" during 1891 had aroused veterans against the South; northern departments therefore approved their commander's pronouncement with enthusiasm. Other veteran societies seized the cue and carried on; at a Kansas Loyal Legion assembly a speaker announced, "When a Union soldier consents to sit or march under the confederate flag, and see the folds of 'Old Glory' . . . mingled with the banner of secession and treason, you may consider his patriotism a thing of the past. . . ." [18]

[17] *Journal 24th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 210; J. S. Taggart to Harrison, May 28, 1890, Harrison MSS.

[18] "General Orders No. 4," November 4, 1891, in *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 311; Boston *Grand Army Record*, August, November, 1891; Washington *National Tribune*, January 7, April 21, 28, May 12, November 5,

A sectional dispute within the Grand Army over the society's official attitude toward the Negro brought out clearly the northern veterans' attitude toward their former enemies. This quarrel resulted from the development of G.A.R. departments in the South and their adoption of a point of view diametrically opposed to that of their northern comrades.

By 1870 southern hostility had destroyed those G.A.R. posts which had mushroomed throughout the South between 1866 and 1868. Posts reappeared in Virginia in 1871, but elsewhere in the South Union veterans were so eager to win southern friendship that they refused to join the despised society. After the Grand Army began lobbying for pensions in the early 1880's, however, it expanded rapidly through the southern states. In 1883 Kentucky veterans organized a provisional department; within a few years Arkansas, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had thriving posts.[19]

These new departments were not entirely composed, like the early ones, of federal employees; they included earnest immigrants from the North who hoped to rear their families in a friendly atmosphere. From the beginning they tried to deflect the unabated hostility of southerners with the reiterated plea to "forget the past." In their encampment addresses, commanders emphasized the bonds of common interest between Union and Confederate soldiers. In many cases Confederates came forward to meet the outstretched hand; soon "blue and gray" reunions became com-

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12, 26, 1892; Major Otis B. Gunn, "Patriotism, the Safeguard of the Nation," paper read before the Kansas Commandery Military Order of the Loyal Legion, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, March 7, 1894, in *Kansas Military Order of the Loyal Legion War Papers* (24 papers bound by Library of Congress, 1891–1903), p. 8; Worcester *Veteran*, February, 1892.

[19] *Proceedings 3rd Encampment Virginia G.A.R.*, 4; *Proceedings Provisional Encampment and Annual Encampments, 1883–1888, Department of Kentucky, G.A.R., compiled from the original records and edited by Comrade George A. Jones*, 1895; MS. Proceedings First and Second Encampments 1883–84, bound in *Proceedings of Encampments Department of Arkansas* (1883–1917); *Third Annual Encampment Department of Alabama, with First and Second Annual Encampments Appended Thereto* (Birmingham, 1891); *Journals Annual Encampments Provisional Department of Georgia* (1889–95), *Journal 1st Encampment*, 1889; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Texas* (1890–1932), *5th Encampment*, 1890; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Tennessee and Georgia* (1885, 1887-88), *Journal 3rd Encampment*, 1887.

mon, as did also parades of Grand Army men marching shoulder to shoulder with their former foes. One G.A.R. officer remarked that he could no longer distinguish the blue from the gray; he regarded them all as "American soldiers." Members even strewed flowers on Confederate graves.[20]

The Nashville *Grand Army Sentinel* assumed as its primary task the strengthening of this mutual sympathy. On one hand it constantly reiterated that southern "disloyalty" had disappeared. In an editorial, "Dress on the Present," the paper proclaimed, "Step by step we have advanced. Seeds of loyalty have been sown here and there, and yonder; the old rebel soldier has *invariably* been the first to join hands with us, and today, thank God! we have a new South. Her people are as loyal to the country and the flag as we, who wore the blue." [21]

On the other hand the *Sentinel* emphasized the willingness of Union veterans to bury the dead past: "We believe the war is over; that it ended at Appomattox where full pardon was granted to our erring countrymen. We do *not* believe that it is humane, or christian-like to continually flaunt in their faces, the sins of those who have once been freely forgiven." The paper had only praise for the Confederate veterans' organization: "The outgrowth of Grand Army work in the South has been to incite a kindly rivalry among the 'boys in gray' and the establishment here and there of camps of Confederate Veterans, having almost exactly the same objects as our own order." [22]

Not only did Grand Army members escape ostracism by proclaiming friendship for their adopted section; they gradually assumed the southern attitude toward the Negro. Many southern posts were composed largely of Negroes in the 1860's; but after the organization's reappearance in the South during the 1880's, comparatively few Negroes claimed membership, and these usu-

[20] *Proceedings Provisional Encampments Kentucky G.A.R.*, 1883–1888, 37; *Proceedings 5th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 7; Nashville *Grand Army Sentinel*, July 5, 1885; *Journal Annual Encampments Department of Florida* (1887–1940), *3rd Encampment*, 15; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Virginia G.A.R.*, 1885, p. 11; *Proceedings 3rd Encampment Tennessee and Georgia G.A.R.*, 26; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, March 7, 1890; *Proceedings 6th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 68; Boston *Bivouac*, October, 1885, p. 396.

[21] Nashville *Grand Army Sentinel*, July 5, September 5, October 20, 1885.

[22] *Ibid.*, July 5, October 20, November 20, 1885.

ally had their own posts. In 1885, for example, the Department of Tennessee and Georgia reported eighty-eight colored and 1,145 white members. At the encampment that year the department commander spoke encouragingly to the colored posts and declared that he was proud of them.[23]

But this cordiality, never very strong, soon disappeared. The determination of the five struggling Louisiana posts to restrict membership along racial lines brought the question to the attention of the organization as a whole. When a group of Louisiana Negroes requested a post charter the Department of the Gulf's administrative council denied the application. This decision was subsequently approved by the department's five posts and by the department encampment. The subject was not allowed to die, however; it cropped up in 1887 during the Grand Army's national encampment at St. Louis. A Wisconsin delegate submitted a resolution that the commander in chief might, on appeal, reverse a department commander's refusal to grant a post charter. The committee on resolutions reported adversely on this suggestion, but the Wisconsin delegate was persistent and the second time more specific. He proposed that if a department commander denied a charter on the basis of the applicants' color the commander in chief might create the post, which would then report directly to national headquarters.

The ensuing discussion indicated clearly the attitude of those members who had sought their fortunes in the deep South. Delegates from Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida believed that it was impossible to find "members of color" who had the knowledge or ability to maintain posts. The organization's junior vice commander, taking exception to this opinion, announced that Virginia had more colored than white posts, and that all reports came in regularly "if not quite in as good shape." The question of admitting Negroes came up frequently in his department, he said, and he always gave his hand to the Negro "rather than to the traitor." A delegate from the Department of the Gulf urged that

[23] *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Utah, G.A.R.*, (1886–1945), *5th Encampment*, 2; "General Orders No. 1," Department of Utah, October 9, 1883, in Washington *National Tribune*, November 1, 1883; Nashville *Grand Army Sentinel*, July 5, 1885; *Proceedings 1st Encampment Tennessee and Georgia G.A.R.*, 26.

the departments be permitted to "regulate themselves," and eloquently defended his own department's position. "The black man stands equal with the white and the proclaiming of that truth upon every occasion when applause may be elicited is a piece of claptrap." He believed, however, that the majority of those in the Negro regiments were not soldiers "in the same sense" as the volunteers. Grand Army members had it in their power to supplant the white Department of the Gulf with a "black" department if they wished, but he hoped the encampment would not "wipe out" comrades who for fifteen years had maintained the organization in New Orleans under difficulties "the most trying that men can possibly meet with," in order to put in their places black men who were not volunteers in any sense of the word. The encampment ignored this appeal and adopted the Wisconsin delegate's resolution.[24]

The problem of colored membership received no wide public notice in 1887. Northern members were too wrought up over the battle-flag controversy and too busy arguing the merits of the service pension movement to give the subject much thought. Moreover, national officers were not eager to stir up dissension in the Grand Army's ranks by assuming the power that the amendment provided. In 1889 the Provisional Department of Georgia tabled a suggestion for organizing a Negro post; and there the matter quietly died.[25]

It was not long, however, before the question arose again in the deep South, and this time it reached such explosive proportions that national officers were forced to give it attention. A factional dispute in the Department of Louisiana and Mississippi's encampment led to the election of two sets of officers. One commander tried to bolster his position by hurriedly organizing five new posts, most of the members of which were colored. The eight posts of the opposing faction, refusing to recognize the Negroes as members, petitioned the national council of administration for permission to form a separate department. When national headquarters refused, the white posts informed the Negroes that they must send their dues and reports directly to national officers. The

[24] *Journal 21st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 250–55.
[25] *Journal 1st Encampment Georgia G.A.R.*, 4.

department's senior vice commander explained that the Union veterans were powerless to change the peculiar social conditions of the section they had chosen as their home:

> The inexorable law of this social condition is such that the white man who associates upon terms of equality with the black man is debarred from all Association with the people of the white race and practically excluded from the privilege of earning a livelihood. . . . it altereth not and operates with an irresistible and crushing force upon all who dare to disregard its behest. . . . This chasm is too wide and deep to be bridged in a generation and even if our comrades were willing their utmost exertions would be impotent to fill it. . . . Our comrades are not to be blamed if they place their duty to those whom God has given into their protection, their wives and children, superior to any demand upon them as social reformers. Ours is purely a social and charitable organization with no ulterior object.[26]

In 1890 the national advocate general had to decide between two opposing sets of delegates to the national encampment; his decision was against the new posts. The unwanted colored posts then asked Commander in Chief Veazey's sanction to the formation of a separate department. This was no new idea; for several years southern members had discussed the possibility of creating a colored department which would include Negroes throughout the country. In 1890 the *National Tribune* discussed this project with the editorial comment that it was "well worth the most serious attention." The position of the colored posts was, moreover, logical. They said, wrote Veazey, that "matters had come to such a pass . . . they did not believe they would be of any account even if they were tolerated without objection; and that if they showed themselves capable of maintaining a Department reasonably well it would grow and they would have an opportunity to show their capacity and would make themselves felt much more potently as a class than it would be possible otherwise." Accord-

[26] *Journal 24th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 56–59; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Louisiana and Mississippi* (1891–1903), *8th Encampment*, 5–16; Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, VIII, 354.

ingly, Veazey recommended to the national encampment of 1891 that the request be granted.[27]

The encampment, however, was by no means willing to accept this solution. Northern members, without prejudice against their occasional colored post comrade, had been grumbling for some time about the attitude of their southern comrades. Grand Army men of the North could point to an all-colored post at New Bedford and another at Providence, Rhode Island, as evidence that they were willing to fraternize with the Negro. When the Negroes themselves changed their minds and demanded recognition within the existing department, an open debate became inevitable. Veazey wrote, "I never suspected they would retract from their written petition as I had taken the precaution to refuse to recommend anything unless they put their claim in writing. If I had suspected a change of base by them I should have recommended that no additional department be authorized except upon the application of the colored people, and then only when in the judgment of the Com. in Chief their best interests and that of the order demanded it." [28]

But the recommendation was made, and when the committee on the commander's report vetoed it a heated debate ensued. A Missouri delegate pointed out that his own department welcomed colored initiates, and he saw no reason why southern branches should not have them. Other members had as little patience for the southern veteran's position. An Indiana delegate inquired, "Don't you think, if you will open your doors and take the colored soldier in and take him by the hand and say to the rebels of the South, he is better than the man who fought against his flag, that you would kill this thing out down there?" Again a Louisiana member begged that his department be permitted to settle its own difficulties. Southern Union veterans, he assured the encampment, would be the first "to maintain the rights of the

[27] *Journal 24th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 56–59; Washington *National Tribune*, October 23, 1890; W. G. Veazey to Fairchild, August 15, 1891, Fairchild MSS.

[28] Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, VIII, 354; *Proceedings 24th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 145; Alexander Powell to Col. William Crook, November 6, 1892, Harrison MSS.; George W. Bryant to Harrison, December 21, 1892, *ibid.*; Noyes, "History of the G.A.R. in Ohio," 38; Veazey to Fairchild, August 15, 1891, Fairchild MSS.

colored men before the laws and tribunals of this country; give him free protection . . . and equality before the law. There the matter ends. . . . It is right that we should conform to the social law and rules that surround us." The majority, however, accepted the view of the member who said that the question was "not one of etiquette, but of patriotism and loyalty." The encampment voted that the Negro posts should remain in the existing department.[29]

The press displayed considerable interest in the Grand Army's decision. The Boston *Grand Army Record* believed that any other outcome would have thrown the society's moral influence "in favor of the political oppression of the colored veterans in the South," while the *National Tribune* concluded that the Grand Army could no more have a color line than a religious one. Republican papers and some independent ones also expressed approval; their comments were similar to that of the Rochester *Herald:* "It would be supremely ungrateful at this late day for the veterans . . . to follow the example of their former foes and proscribe their former friends." Other journals, however, wondered with the New York *Herald* "what proportion of our Northern veterans would feel just as these Southern veterans do if they were citizens of Louisiana?" [30]

The Louisiana Department refused to accept the decision. After the new commander in chief, Captain John Palmer, ousted the department head and successively appointed two others, the department met in special session and surrendered its charter. Palmer, who firmly believed that "a man who is willing to stand between the flag and those who would destroy it . . . is good enough to be a comrade in any department of the Grand Army . . . ," refused to recognize this action. He appointed still another officer, who reorganized the department and included

[29] *Journal 25th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 259–63.

[30] Boston *Grand Army Record*, August, 1891; Washington *National Tribune*, August 13, 1891; New York *Independent*, quoted in Boston *Grand Army Record*, September, 1891; Rochester *Herald*, Pittsburgh *Times*, Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Providence *Journal*, New York *Mail and Express*, Terre Haute *Express*, Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, New York *Herald*, New York *Evening Post*, Kansas City *Star*, Detroit *News*, New Orleans *Picayune*, and Charleston *News and Courier*, all quoted in *Public Opinion*, XI, 450–52; *Journal 4th Encampment Georgia G.A.R.*, 1892, p. 13; *Proceedings Encampments Arkansas G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 9.

the colored posts. Many whites resigned in disgust, and the department became largely composed of Negroes. By 1898 Louisiana claimed 1,314 members, many of them colored. Palmer complained that the issue "tested the patience, skill, and endurance" of the national commanders and cost the national encampment "more money, time and energy through the exertions of comrades sent . . . to check the . . . growing mischief than all other departments combined from the inception of the order." [31] Throughout this dispute, the southern members were never asked to take Negroes into their posts; the struggle was over acceptance of separate colored posts within the department.

Although Louisiana and Mississippi members had gone down to defeat on the Negro issue, other southern departments were determined not to submit. In 1891 an Alabama officer reported to his state encampment the results of his investigation into the advisability of organizing Negro posts in Mobile. He recommended strongly against the step on the ground that it would lead to the disbanding of white posts there as well as elsewhere in the state. "Such close comradeship as our order inspires, will not permit of the introduction of this element into our ranks—at least, here in the South where the question of race enters so largely into the subject affecting man's happiness and success." Four years later the national encampment received a complaint that the department had refused to muster a colored post.[32]

When in 1892 a Negro group requested a post charter from Texas headquarters, it received a cold refusal. Reports that the department was consistently refusing similar petitions on the ground that they were incorrectly made out led the commander in chief to send an investigator to Texas in 1896. The agent reported that the State commander was justified in his position; this prevented the issue from being thrashed out in the national encampment and the public press as had been the case with the Louisiana-Mississippi dispute. Commander in Chief Ivan Walker

[31] Chicago *Tribune*, September 21, 22, 1892; *Proceedings 9th Encampment Louisiana and Mississippi G.A.R.*, 2–13; *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 53–57, 238; Worcester *Veteran*, May, 1892; Boston *Grand Army Record*, October, 1892.

[32] *Proceedings Encampments Alabama G.A.R.*, 1891, p. 1; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 82.

assured his encampment that had the applicants proved "worthy" of membership, the post would have been mustered: "This is a serious problem in Southern Departments but no honorably discharged veteran should be discriminated against on account of the color of his skin. There must be other and valid reasons for his rejection." The Arkansas Department included colored posts, but the commander reported in 1897 that for years officers had accepted fees and dues from them without placing one cent to their credit.[33]

In 1898 Commander in Chief J. P. S. Gobin complained after visiting the South, "There are many colored soldiers in some of the departments laboring under great disadvantage. The race prejudice remains and the chasm seems to be widening. . . ." But national headquarters made no further effort to force its views upon the unwilling southern departments. Officers simply ignored a situation which they would not sanction. The Woman's Relief Corps was forced to deal with a similar difference of opinion between northern and southern members. After years of wrangling, the organization finally agreed in 1901 to accept separation of southern units along color lines.[34]

Southern Grand Army members were disposed to be more tolerant than their northern comrades toward those who had deserted from the Confederate forces to join the Union. From time to time they suggested that these men be made eligible for Grand Army membership. The Department of Tennessee and Georgia, for example, suggested to the national encampment in 1885 and again 1888 that the word "voluntarily" be prefixed to the clause banning those who bore arms against the Union.[35] But the majority always vehemently opposed any such concession.

While differences in point of view occasionally led the southern branches to revolt against the Grand Army majority, instances

[33] *Proceedings 7th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 28, 72; *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 64; *Proceedings Encampments Arkansas G.A.R.*, 1897, p. 5; *Journals Annual Encampments Department of Georgia and South Carolina* (1896–1917), *9th Encampment*, 12.

[34] *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 52; Wallace E. Davies, "The Problem of Racial Segregation in the Grand Army of the Republic," in *Journal of Southern History* (Baton Rouge, Lexington, 1935–), XIII (1947), 353–72.

[35] *Proceedings First Encampment Tennessee and Georgia G.A.R.*, 17; Minneapolis *Tribune*, August 19, 1888.

of co-operation were less publicized but nonetheless frequent. Southern posts sought and received aid from northern departments in decorating Union graves. Grant Memorial University, at Athens, Tennessee, was a Grand Army enterprise that received donations from northern comrades. Established in 1867 under Methodist auspices for "loyalists' " offspring, who "suffered more or less ostracism in the schools of the Old South," the institution had been sponsored from the beginning by Union veterans. In 1887 the university requested subscriptions from posts throughout the country to establish its "John A. Logan Hall of Science" and received the endorsement of the commander in chief and other prominent Grand Army members. Veterans' children composed an important element in the student body; the institution offered to every post in Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama a free scholarship for a veteran's son. The university's officers formed a nucleus of Republicanism and did what they could, as one Grand Army member put it, to help "break the solid South." [36]

After 1892 the differences in attitudes between northern and southern G.A.R. men were not so noticeable. The society's textbook agitation had irritated the United Confederate Veterans, and at their reunion in 1892 the Confederates appointed a history committee to choose "proper" books for southern schools. The Confederate Veterans were henceforth as aggressive as the Grand Army in demanding that history books be slanted to favor their section. Torn between two opposing demands for "loyalty," southern Grand Army men joined the crusade of their northern comrades. The Tennessee commander's encampment address in 1891 indicated a growing coolness between Union and Confederate veterans: "We are told that being the victors we can afford to be magnanimous, but we cannot afford to haul down 'Old Glory' nor must we neglect to show to . . . the Sons of Veterans . . . that it is very much more honorable to fight *for* one's country than against it. Do not let the fires die down." [37]

[36] New York *Tribune*, May 28, 1889; *Proceedings 21st Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 105–106; *Proceedings 10th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 78; John F. Spence to Halford, February 14, 1889, enclosing circular, Harrison MSS.; *Proceedings 11th Encampment Tennessee G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 93; Gilbert E. Govan and James Weston Livingood, *The University of Chattanooga: Sixty Years* (Chattanooga, 1946), 49, 52, 110, 114.

[37] Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History*, 146–48; *Proceedings 8th Encampment Tennessee G.A.R.*, 55; *9th Encampment*, 43–44.

Abandoning their conciliatory policy toward former Confederates, the southern departments enthusiastically joined those of the North in an attempt to force "loyalty" upon the South. In 1892 the Arkansas commander proclaimed that the southern Grand Army had a missionary duty: "to leaven this great ponderous lump of disloyalty that exists here." Southern departments urged state legislation to place the Stars and Stripes over every schoolhouse and sponsored patriotic exercises on Columbus Day. Moreover, they demanded that only "loyal history" be taught. This agitation clashed with the growing southern sentimentalism which shed copious tears and wrote dripping columns on the Lost Cause. Hence for several years, particularly during Cleveland's second administration, the South scorned the G.A.R. One southern newspaper termed the organization a "grand army of beggars" for pensions which "buy the soldier vote and enrich the pension agents;" the Tennessee Grand Army commander complained that in some localities the Union veteran was "a stench in the nostrils of his unrepentant neighbors. . . . To these a Grand Army Post is a horror, a nightmare, an object of contempt; the butt of ridicule. . . ." But the surge of nationalism that came with the Spanish-American War served to bridge once more the gap between southern Grand Army men and their obdurate neighbors.[38]

The migration of Union veterans southward during the 1890's brought recruits to the rapidly diminishing ranks of southern departments. In 1894 Philander Fitzgerald, the proprietor of the Indianapolis *American Tribune*, sponsored the colony of Fitzgerald in Georgia. Modeled upon the earlier Union veterans' colony at Greeley, Colorado, Fitzgerald claimed a population of 10,000 by 1897, and was drawing $250,000 from the Pension Bureau. The Alabama Department officially urged northern members to colonize their state. During this period members overwhelmed national headquarters with inquiries regarding land

[38] *Proceedings Encampments Arkansas G.A.R.*, 1892, pp. 9–10; *Journal 11th Encampment Georgia and South Carolina G.A.R.*, 15; *Proceedings 23rd Encampment Virginia and North Carolina G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 48; *Journal 10th Encampment Florida G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 10; *Proceedings 11th Encampment Kentucky G.A.R.*, 51; *Proceedings 24th Encampment Virginia and North Carolina G.A.R.*, 39, 59; Charleston, S.C., *News and Courier*, quoted in Indianapolis *American Tribune*, November 3, 1892; *Proceedings 12th Encampment Tennessee G.A.R.*, 1895, p. 43.

enterprises and soldier colonizations in the South. Possibly it was these transferred members who led the southern branches to adopt a more unbending attitude toward former Confederates.[39]

The Grand Army, with the aid of minor organizations, continued its agitation for liberalized pension legislation, and the society also lobbied zealously for a veteran-preference law. But the administration, although willing to interpret the pension act of 1890 with great liberality and to shower veterans with appointments, was afraid to risk public hostility by giving further legislative evidence of favor for a special class. The veteran-preference measure went down to quiet defeat, and there were no indications that the service-pension movement would win an early success. The New York *Tribune*, champion of former soldiers' demands since 1887, deserted them in 1890 with a statement that expressed a growing public sentiment. Only a small minority of veterans, said the journal, really expected service pensions: ". . . it will be remembered that a debt which the Nation can never fully pay is for that reason not a debt which it can with propriety be called upon to pay. . . . To mortgage the earnings of sixty millions of people all their lives in order to pay sums to half a million or more for the others who are not in need is not to lessen the accumulated earnings of a few rich men, but it is to cut down the scanty earnings of the poor." [40]

Although many veterans were so well satisfied with the new pension law that they lost interest in organizations, others complained that Republicans were not fulfilling their campaign promises. This disgruntled group threatened retaliation. After the Democratic victory in 1890, the Indianapolis *American Tribune* announced that the Republican party's only hope was to "stop its

[39] *Proceedings 13th Encampment Kentucky G.A.R.*, 59; *Journal 8th Encampment Georgia and South Carolina G.A.R.*, 11; *9th Encampment*, 12; Spence to Harrison, February 14, 1889, Harrison MSS.; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 6, 21, 28, July 5, 12, 19, 1894, November 5, December 19, 21, 1895, January 9, March 12, 19, June 11, 1896, April 15, 1897; Washington *National Tribune*, May 2, 1895; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 401.

[40] Worcester *Veteran*, November, 1891, February, 1892; William Hayes Grier to Cleveland, December 3, 1895, Cleveland MSS.; L. A. Wickes to Harrison, June 19, 1890, with enclosed clipping, Harrison MSS.; Merrill to *id.*, May 12, 1890, *ibid.*; Fred S. Goodrich to Halford, August 1, 1889, *ibid.*; Michener to *id.*, June 4, 1890, *ibid.*; Woods, "The G.A.R. and Civil Service," 61–76; New York *Tribune*, August 20, 1890; Washington *National Tribune*, July 24, 1890.

foolishness, pass a service pension law." One disgusted Indiana veteran wrote, "Let me say that we voted every weak kneed soldier for Harrison and Hovey, believing that the party would do just what it said it would do. . . . As soon as the g.o.p. got into power it bounced the old soldiers. . . . We made our post do good work for the g.o.p., but from this time on, now and forever, amen, we are going to make it red hot for the g.o.p. Watch, democratic soldiers. Don't let them hoodwink you and Call it being loyal to the country and love for the boys." [41]

Western soldiers, in fact, seeing no immediate prospect of gaining further grants through organized lobbying, were abandoning their alliance with the party of big business to join a pressure group that expressed their economic grievances. The Indianapolis *American Tribune* remarked of western veterans, "Their lands and homes are mortgaged and the interest has been defaulted. Gradually, in the meantime they have become impatient over the long unheeded requests for a service pension, and at last, in their despairing desperate condition, many are found joining a new party." Combining with their civilian neighbors in the Farmers' Alliance, western servicemen forgot the nation's debt to the Union defenders in their demands for low rates of interest on government loans, equal taxation for all, and changes in the national bank system of issuing money.[42]

Western Republicans were alarmed. In Kansas they called a monster Grand Army meeting in order to denounce the alliance as well as to press the candidacy of Ingalls for the Senate. General T. S. Clarkson, Nebraska G.A.R. commander and prominent Republican politician, assured the assembled delegates from thirty-two counties that they would not "get anything by experiments." What they needed was a champion in Congress to get pensions for them. Ingalls, Logan's successor in this great work, would take care of them. "My comrades in Nebraska," Clarkson cried, "ask you to be soldiers yet. We have almost as important a duty thrown upon us as we had when our flag was first attacked." One speaker

[41] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, November 14, 1890; Hovey to Fairchild, December 28, 1888, Fairchild MSS.; "Old Soldier," in Indianapolis *Daily Sentinel*, quoted in Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 10, 1890.

[42] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, August 14, 1890, March 27, April 10, 1891; Frederick Emory Haynes, *Third Party Movements Since the Civil War, With Special Reference to Iowa* (Iowa City, 1916), 246.

asked the G.A.R. men, "Are you taking your inspiration from your old time friends or are you getting it from some other source?" Another, striving to prove that the southern Farmers' Alliance was a "rebel scheme," asserted that the Kansas "boys" would lose their pensions if it attained power. Impressed by these arguments, the assembly strongly endorsed Ingalls. A number of Kansas posts also passed resolutions favoring his return to Washington, but Democrats neutralized their influence by persuading other posts to give official support to Ingalls' opponent. The defeat of the "soldiers' friend" indicated that some western veterans were giving more thought to their mortgages than to the possibility of increased pensions or the desirability of keeping the "rebel sympathising" Democrats out of office.[43]

If Republicans perceived the importance of the veterans' defection, they were nevertheless in no position to go beyond propaganda in appealing to the deserters. High pension expenditures, resulting partly from liberal interpretation of the laws but particularly from the act of 1890, were obviously related to the Treasury's difficulties. The Democratic press constantly emphasized this point, and Republicans were afraid to risk public condemnation by promising additional pension legislation to former soldiers.

This factor operated against the prospects of General Alger, who, with the aid of Mrs. Logan and the *National Tribune*, was continuing his whirlwind campaign to capture the presidential nomination. The general built up soldiers' enthusiasm by shouting for service pensions; he proclaimed his views even as chairman of Decoration Day ceremonies at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. One paper, commenting on the strength of his position, remarked that he represented the Northwest and the Grand Army, and that as commander in chief of that organization he had a wider acquaintance throughout the northern states than any other politician. But Alger faced John Sherman's enmity as well as the determination of Harrison's supporters. Moreover, an extremist on the subject of veterans' legislation could scarcely balance himself on the convention's platform, which merely pledged

[43] John Livingston to Harrison, February 6, 1891, enclosing clipping from Topeka *Daily Capital Sun*, January 25, 1891, Harrison MSS.; *Proceedings 10th Encampment Kansas G.A.R.*, 1891, p. 9.

"a watchful care and recognition" of the old soldiers' "just claims." [44]

The veterans' political power received full recognition, however, in the nominations. Republicans emphasized Harrison's military career in their campaign textbook. In Missouri they hoped to prevent a stampede of veterans over economic issues by heading their ticket with William Warner, recently G.A.R. commander in chief; similar motives led them to name for governor of Indiana the eager participant in soldiers' reunions and former Grand Army department commander, Ira J. Chase.[45]

The fact that the Democratic convention passed over General Palmer, who was ardently championed by the Chicago *Herald*, to renominate Cleveland was a matter for Republican rejoicing. Administration supporters apparently hoped to hold the soldiers by repeating their personal attack of the previous campaign. Accordingly they forgot the subject of further rewards after victory in emphasizing Cleveland's pension vetoes and the fact that both the Democratic candidates had sent substitutes to the field. Senator John Thurman, for example, asserted that Cleveland had never entertained any "sympathies for the Union soldier or the Union cause." A chapter in the Republican campaign textbook, entitled "Pensions and Veterans," emphasized Cleveland's "insulting" veto messages and his cowardice in evading army service. The New York *Tribune* confined its appeal to flattering praise for the aging heroes, but other Republican papers followed the lead of the campaign textbook, as did also the party's speakers. Senator Cushman K. Davis tearfully condemned Cleveland's vetoes as "crueller than an assassin's knife stabbed through many a widow's heart, and old soldier's heart." [46]

[44] Clippings, May 31, 1890, in Harrison MSS.; C. S. Hammond to Halford, March 11, 1890, *ibid.;* G. S. Little to *id.*, April 18, 1890, *ibid.;* Michener to *id.*, July 31, 1891, *ibid.;* Alger to Harrison, July 18, 1890, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, July 9, 1891, *ibid.;* John Livingston to Halford, July 15, 1890, enclosing clipping from New York *Star*, July 15, 1890, *ibid.;* A. L. Conger to *id.*, July 26, 1890, *ibid.;* Washington *National Tribune*, September 5, 1889, January 28, March 24, 1892; Boston *Grand Army Record*, March 24, 1892; *Proceedings Tenth Republican National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 7–10, 1892* (Minneapolis, 1892), 88; Minneapolis *Tribune*, June 1, 4, 1892.

[45] *Republican Campaign Text Book* (Washington and New York, 1892), 3; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 2, July 7, 1892.

[46] *Republican Campaign Text Book*, 1892, pp. 173–80; Albert C. Hopkins to Cleveland, March 31, 1892, Cleveland MSS.; Richard Coke to R. Morgan, May

The veterans' press maintained a constant volley of abuse against Cleveland for his war and pension-bill record. The Boston *Grand Army Record* proclaimed that his election would be "a gross insult to every Union soldier"; the Indianapolis *American Tribune*, reportedly under the Indiana Republican Committee's management, published cartoons showing the former President fishing on Memorial Day and sneering at soldiers' claims. The latter paper, filled with abuse of Cleveland, was sent to nonsubscribers as a campaign sheet. The Washington *National Tribune*, almost forgetting its tariff propaganda, devoted major attention to a virulent attack on Cleveland and addressed numerous "open-letters" to veterans urging that they veto the "vetoer." [47]

In appealing to the soldiers' vote Republicans had to combat the People's party as well as the Democrats. The third party's platform contained a pension plank, but this was only a pledge to support "fair and liberal pensions." The People's party relied not so much upon a bid to veterans as a separate class as upon propaganda addressed to them as members of the lower economic ranks. Soldiers' papers under Republican influence earnestly challenged these arguments. The Washington *National Tribune* termed the movement a "cunning snare set by Cleveland's Southern friends to capture the Presidency by a trick." The Indianapolis *American Tribune* termed the party's vice-presidential choice, James G. Field of Virginia, "one of the most vituperative and unreconstructed Rebels in the South" and argued that its principles of currency inflation and free coinage of silver were against veterans' interests: "Anything that tends to destroy in the least the purchasing power of the money they receive in the way of pensions, robs them of just that much." [48]

Republicans left the bloody shirt untouched so far as the gen-

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31, 1892, *ibid.;* Minneapolis *Tribune*, October 18, 1892; extracts from Milwaukee *Telegraph* among letters dated October 5, 1892, *ibid.;* Hugins, *Grover Cleveland, a Study in Political Courage*, 12.

[47] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 7, 14, 28, August 4, 18, September 8, October 6, 20, 27, November 3, 1892; Boston *Grand Army Record*, October, 1892; Washington *National Tribune*, March 24, April 14, June 16, 30, July 7, September 8, 15, 29, October 6, 13, 20, 27, November 3, 1892.

[48] Quoted in *Republican Campaign Text Book*, 1892, p. 35; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 67; Washington *National Tribune*, October 20, 1892; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 14, July 28, August 4, 1892.

eral public was concerned, but they waved it vigorously for the benefit of the old soldiers. In a desperate effort to hold western veterans in Republican ranks the Indianapolis *American Tribune* resorted to the device of urging, "Vote as you shot." The paper attacked the South for its political oppression of Negroes and its lack of national patriotism. "The unrepentant Rebels of the South are still trying to fire the Southern heart and to take elections in the old slave states as they did in 1860." In September it began reviewing "the disloyal record of the Democratic party in Indiana during the War," and until after the election articles appeared weekly discussing the Knights of the Golden Circle, Democratic peace resolutions, and conspiracies to release Confederate prisoners. The journal begged, "Boys, vote as you shot, and you will preserve the fruits of the victory you won on the field. The men who failed to shoot you are now laboring to starve you to death." The Washington *National Tribune* used the same arguments.[49]

In a campaign that lacked the "high pressure enthusiasm" which had previously found vent in brass bands, boisterous parades, torchlight processions, and campaign songs, Republicans forgot the shouting veterans' campaign clubs of former years. Instead they waved the bloody shirt before existing organizations. General Lew Wallace, commander of the Indiana Loyal Legion, shouted to the society's convention, "Companions, let us keep the Commandery alive. . . . The Solid South is but another name for the Confederacy. It needs watching. We cannot sit down over against it in army corps, but we can in loyal organizations; and the more organizations we have for the purpose the better." General Daniel E. Sickles, repentant for his apostasy from Republicanism, aroused much press comment with his address to the meeting of the Third Army Corps Union. He assured the veterans that not one of them would vote for Cleveland and pointed out that Harrison "didn't send a substitute to the war." Republicans made a similar effort to influence Grand Army members, but Democrats blocked them to some extent.[50]

[49] Washington *National Tribune*, May 12, June 9, September 29, October 6, 13, 20, 1892; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 9, July 14, August 4, 11, 18, 25, September 8, 15, 22, 29, October 6, 27, November 3, 10, 17, 1892.

[50] New York *Herald*, October 26, 1892; Gowdy to Halford, September 29, 1892, Harrison MSS.; Charles H. T. Collis to *id.*, September 29, 1892, *ibid.*

Democrats, who gave considerable attention to veterans and the pension question, divided their propaganda into two categories. The first, directed to the general public, was a vehement attack upon the extravagant Republican pension policy. The platform pledge of liberal pensions for the disabled was an unexpressed veto on the demand for grants based on service alone. The platform also denounced the administration of the Pension Bureau as "incompetent, corrupt, disgraceful, and dishonest." The campaign textbook condemned private pension bills as "an injustice toward and an inexcusable discrimination against, the hundreds of thousands who have to submit to the operation of general laws." In his letter of acceptance Cleveland promised "consideration" for worthy veterans, but repeated his contention that the pension list must be a roll of honor "unvitiated by demagogic use." [51]

The Democratic press echoed these views. The New York *Herald* predicted that almost all the customs receipts for 1892 would go for pensions and remarked that "the entire burden of McKinleyism" was put upon the country "to pay bounties to a million men who are no longer doing anything in return for the burden they impose upon the people." When, asked the *Herald*, would the drain stop? "If the Pension Office is to be continued as a political machine no man can tell where it will stop." [52]

The second Democratic appeal to veterans vigorously challenged Republican charges that Cleveland had shown hostility to former soldiers during his first administration. This propaganda also begged servicemen to regard the pension list as a "roll of honor" from which all frauds should be removed. The Philadelphia *Times* declared, "Every intelligent veteran knows that our pension system has been made frightfully oppressive upon the people, and that it has been made so largely by pensions which are not merited." [53]

An effective agency for refuting Republican charges was the

Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 2, October 6, 1892; statement of General O. O. Howard in New York *Tribune*, April 16, 1890; Minneapolis *Tribune*, October 17, 1892.

[51] *Democratic Party, Campaign Text Book* (New York, 1892), 8, 262; McElroy, *Grover Cleveland*, I, 354.

[52] New York *Herald*, June 14, 1892; *Public Opinion*, XIV, 54.

[53] Quoted in *Public Opinion*, XIV, 54; *ibid.*, 78.

Veterans' Tariff Reform League, which, under the energetic management of Secretary Theodore F. Reed and the financial support of the Democratic national committee, flooded the country with propaganda. Reed was prominent in New York Grand Army circles and knew how to work among the boys. The organization's main purpose was not, as its title might suggest, to disseminate low-tariff doctrines but to convince veterans that Cleveland was not their enemy. Reed, convinced that the soldiers' vote would control the election in New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Indiana, and Illinois, organized a bureau to train agents for campaign work among veterans. "I . . . met the enemy half way; my object being to secure men in *every County* who will see that our particular documents go to *every* comrade. . . ." Before October Reed had sent out from his headquarters over nine hundred personal letters and more than six thousand documents. Just before the election the organization distributed to veterans 16,800 circulars which defended Cleveland's vetoes, begged soldiers to make the pension list a "roll of honor," and charged that Harrison's appointments had favored officers rather than volunteers. Joseph W. Kay, leader of the Veterans' Rights Union, added his efforts to those of Reed in striving to convince soldiers of Cleveland's friendliness.[54]

Although no national veterans' campaign organization functioned, local workers in many towns organized soldiers' clubs to cheer for Cleveland. Democratic efforts among the servicemen were particularly energetic in the doubtful states of New York and Indiana. An Indiana politician wrote, "We certainly can carry this State for you, unless we lose too many of the soldier Vote. The republican ticket will lose many german voters—and they are making a special effort to regain their losses by the soldier vote." [55]

[54] Theodore F. Reed to Cleveland, September 26, 1892, Cleveland MSS.; E. J. Atkinson to Hon. Charles Tracey, May 23, 1895, *ibid.;* circular, Reed to "Comrade," New York, November 2, 1892, *ibid.;* Joseph W. Kay to Cleveland, August 29, 1892, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, September 14, 1892, *ibid.; id.* to John G. Carlisle, November 10, 1893, *ibid.*

[55] John A. Bamber to Cleveland, August 17, 1892, *ibid.;* E. R. Roberts to *id.*, September 14, 1892, *ibid.;* James D. Wood, G. W. Anderson, and George L. Hays to *id.*, October 17, 1892, *ibid.;* M. V. B. Spencer to *id.*, September 5, 1892, *ibid.*

In Indiana Democrats created considerable anxiety among Republicans because they convinced so many old soldiers that their only chance of winning pensions promptly was through the influence of Democratic congressmen. The new Republican state chairman laid this problem before the President, who referred it to Commissioner Raum. The latter assured Harrison that congressmen had nothing to do with drawing cases from the files for special consideration. It was, however, a well-established custom for claimants to request the influence of their congressmen; the letters that these members wrote to the bureau were meaningless, but they received notification when the claims were taken up and again when the pensions were granted. The congressmen could then transmit these letters to the claimants as evidence of their aid. Raum admitted that if the bureau should toss these congressional requests into the wastebasket, it would be relieved of considerable labor and be enabled to "adjudicate more claims per year." But in that case, he reminded Harrison, Republican as well as Democratic congressmen would lose the advantage that apparently meant so much to them. He pointed out that he had given "our Republican friends of Indiana" every possible advantage; his examiners were all Republican, and he had discharged Democratic employees for "alleged partisanship." More than that he could not do, since his aim was to make the bureau "so efficient and impartial in administration that it would commend this Republican administration to the confidence and esteem not only of veterans but of the general public." [56]

Indiana Republicans were willing to accept Raum's contention that his office was run on a "strictly non partisan" basis, but they complained that circumstances were all in the Democrats' favor. The office of the Pension Bureau in Indiana occupied rooms directly below those of Democratic state headquarters. Not only did emissaries from the latter visit the former to chat with veterans and distribute campaign material; the boys frequently went upstairs to "counsel" with the chairman and the secretary. In October the Indiana Republican chairman was horrified to learn that the bureau was returning a large number of rejected Indiana claims. Frantically he urged that the commissioner be returned

[56] Raum to Harrison, April 18, 1892, Harrison MSS.

from the stump to Washington in order to stop "without delay . . . the rejection of claims until after the 8th of November." He begged despairingly that Ohio's eloquent General Gibson be sent to Indiana "as an inspiration to the old soldier." [57] Assuredly, so far as the Pension Bureau was concerned, the advantages this time were not with Indiana Republicans.

Harrison's advocates ridiculed the Tariff Reform League and loudly asserted that Democratic efforts to win the support of veterans would be futile. The New York *Press* declared, "It was a decided blunder on the part of the Democratic managers to undertake their recently inaugurated special campaign among the soldiers in behalf of Grover Cleveland. . . . Their frantic efforts . . . will only bring into greater prominence the contempt for the soldiers which has animated the Democratic Presidential candidate ever since his first appearance in public life." [58]

Reed, however, reported to Cleveland the "*indisputable evidences* coming to this office that thousands of the 'Boys in Blue' are changing their views on politics." Their reason, he wrote, was that "they believe in Grover Cleveland." [59]

Republicans tried to make their usual quiet use of the Grand Army; their failure demonstrated the effectiveness of Democratic propaganda as well as the lack of definite Republican promises. Cleveland's henchmen worked within the society not only to prevent its use by Republicans but to turn it where they could to their own advantage. When they produced campaign badges which were exact facsimiles of the G.A.R. insignia bearing Cleveland's picture, they discovered that they had gone too far. Commander in Chief Palmer issued a circular urging every member "not to disgrace the order by placing this *thing* upon his breast." [60]

Democrats concentrated their attention upon plans for the national encampment at Washington, D.C. One worker wrote that the gathering would "be utilized by the Republicans so far as pos-

[57] Gowdy to Harrison, May 5, 1892, *ibid.; id.* to Halford, September 29, 1892, *ibid.; id.* to *id.*, October 15, 1892, *ibid.*

[58] New York *Press*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, XIV, 54; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 20, November 3, 1892.

[59] T. F. Reed to Cleveland, September 26, 1892, Cleveland MSS.

[60] *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 338; Boston *Grand Army Record*, August, 1892; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, August 18, September 1, 1892.

sible to start a soldier sentiment. I am designated to command the Third Brigade consisting of all King's county veterans and it is my purpose to be alert in this matter." He suggested that immediately after the close of proceedings Democrats distribute broadsides emphasizing Cleveland's solicitude for veterans' "real interests." [61]

When the organization's executive committee met to discuss invitations, Tanner, who had proclaimed his refusal to work for Harrison's re-election, urged that Cleveland receive one. But the majority, fearing unpleasantness, decided to invite only public officials. Accordingly Harrison received an invitation without question while Cleveland did not. The President displayed keen interest in the extensive preparations for the assembly, and planned a White House reception for the boys.[62]

The congressional appropriation for the encampment financed a veritable city of tents for the expected 250,000 visitors, and Washington was decked with flags for the gala occasion. A unique decorative feature was the illumination of Pennsylvania Avenue, along which were placed skeletons of corps badges and other emblems. These flashed out "with all the intense brilliance of incandescent lights." A monster illuminated Grand Army badge, standing on the corner of the Treasury grounds, was visible the entire length of the avenue to the Capitol. Mrs. Logan supervised the Capitol-rotunda decorations, a prominent feature of which was a tapestry of Logan's rally at Atlanta. The boys brought their families early to see the sights, and the city's facilities were soon taxed to the utmost.[63]

The great parade, a day-long march from the Peace Monument to the edge of Georgetown, took many back to the grand review of 1865. It was estimated that approximately half the marchers had followed the same route twenty-seven years before. "Time

[61] J. L. Catlin to Cleveland, September 13, 1892, Cleveland MSS.

[62] Catlin to Cleveland, September 15, 1892, *ibid.;* Lawrence Gardner to *id.*, September 6, 1892, *ibid.;* Harrison to George W. Johnson, October 12, 1891, Tibbott Transcripts, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to John M. Douglas, March 9, 1892, Harrison MSS.; *id.* to William Brackfield Chairmanac (?), August 19, 1892, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune*, September 3, 1892.

[63] Boston *Grand Army Record*, September, 1892; New York *Tribune*, September 18, 19, 20, 1892; Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 19, 1892; Chicago *Tribune*, September 17, 1892.

had grizzled their heads and slackened their gait," observed the Chicago *Tribune*, "but it had not dulled their enthusiasm." Former President Hayes, who marched with his comrades, commented, "It was enough to stir the blood of the coldest and oldest." Thousands, unable to make the long tramp, stood on the side lines. The sentiments of spectators were touched by the realization that the Capitol would never again see so large a gathering of the old Union men. The reaction of the Boston *Grand Army Record* was more practical; it hoped that the parade's "exhibition of voting strength" would influence federal "executive, legislative and judicial officers" to respect the "rights of the Comrades." [64]

Representatives of both parties were on hand to work quietly among the members. Harrison was unable to attend because of his wife's serious illness, but Vice-President Levi P. Morton was much in evidence; he formally opened the reunion and dedicated "Grand Army Place." If Republicans hoped to make the encampment a political rally like that of 1888, they were doomed to disappointment. Many members carried Cleveland emblems. One Democrat wrote, "Thus far I have not heard a partizan word from the lips of a veteran, and the efforts of politicians to give the occasion a partizan aspect have fallen flat." Another rejoiced, "I have been amazed . . . at the vast number of G.A.R. men here attending the Encampment who were for you [Cleveland]. . . . You have nothing to fear from the 'old soldiers' this time. . . . Among the soldiers of Mass. New York and Wisconsin you were particularly stronge [*sic*]. Democrats here are full of hope and fight. Republicans are greatly disappointed, and it is felt in the very air—the air that was fully expected would be Republican air during the Encampment, that you would sweep the country on Nov. 8th." [65]

But the fact that some members favored Cleveland by no means meant that Democrats could derive political benefit from the or-

[64] Chicago *Tribune*, September 21, 23, 1892; Boston *Grand Army Record*, August, 1892; Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, V, 106.

[65] New York *Tribune*, September 19, 1892; Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, V, 106; Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 20, 1892; *Public Opinion*, XIV, 5; Catlin to Cleveland, September 21, 1892, Cleveland MSS.; H. B. Bell to *id.*, September 22, 1892, *ibid.*

ganization. The new commander in chief, A. G. Weissert, ordered department commanders "rigidly to enforce the strictest observance" of the regulation prohibiting political activities.[66] The Grand Army maintained its nonpartisanship position with much greater success than in 1888.

The extravagant Republican pension record as well as the high-tariff program contributed to the party's defeat. The tariff question was of primary importance, and Republicans concentrated their arguments upon the necessity for protection. But Democrats skillfully evaded the issue by failing to emphasize the revenue plank in their platform; and the conviction became general that if they were elected, they would tolerate a protective tariff. Moreover Democrats derived considerable benefit from the Homestead strike, which for them exemplified the failure of highly protected industry to satisfy labor.[67]

If the tariff issue proved a boomerang to Republicans, the pension question was an important contributing factor to the administration's unpopularity. They had overshot their goal in the pension act of 1890 as well as in the McKinley Tariff, and caustic Democratic criticism placed them on the defensive. Before 1890 Republicans had encountered little opposition to their expensive policy of buying the veterans' vote, but with the pension law of that year popular reaction began. Many Democrats, to be sure, had supported the bill, but the administration had to bear the responsibility for its passage. The scandals of the Tanner and Raum Pension Bureau regimes heightened popular dissatisfaction, while the Grand Army's increasingly exorbitant demands, producing a suspicion that the society was mercenary, discounted the feeling of gratitude for the veterans' services. *MacMillan's* reported a "strong feeling" against the G.A.R. in "many quarters," based on the relief that it was "a great political engine" and that it tended to perpetuate sectional bitterness. The Charleston *News and Courier* claimed that it had no fear of arousing northerners' animosity in terming the society a "grand army of beggars" be-

[66] *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 333.

[67] Davis Rich Dewey, *National Problems, 1885–1897*, in A. B. Hart (ed.), *American Nation, A History* (New York, 1907), XXIV, 246–50; Nevins, *Cleveland*, 498–509; Muzzey, *James G. Blaine*, 479; Fuess, *Schurz*, 320; Dunn, *From Harrison to Harding*, I, 90.

cause the public was "gradually awaking to the fact of the injustice and inequity of the enormous pensions, which buy the soldier vote and enrich the pension agents." Certainly the attacks of the independent press indicated that to many voters the Republican pension policy was as distasteful as its record on tariff or the civil service. In October one Democrat named the Republican pension record as the most important reason for his party's improving prospects in Ohio.[68]

Although Republicans avoided the bloody shirt except in their appeals to veterans, Democrats used the sectional issue effectively in the South. Republicans had dropped the Force Bill, but Democrats "used that scarecrow to solidify the South and to frighten some timid people in the North." Whatever the effect of this bloody-shirt waving on northerners, the threats that the Force Bill might be revived reawakened fears of Negro supremacy and kept the South "solid." [69]

While the costly pension program helped discredit them with the general public, Republicans could not expect united veterans' support to offset their losses elsewhere. Liberal interpretation of the 1890 act was already depleting the Treasury; the party dared not offer further bribes to servicemen. And in the absence of special inducements apparently many of the boys deserted the Republicans despite the exhortations of veterans' journals. The determined Democratic campaign to prove that Cleveland was the friend of the "worthy" old soldier may have been an important factor in this change. Although a large number of veterans undoubtedly dreaded Cleveland's election as the precursor of an attack on the pension system, indications are clear that many more soldiers supported Cleveland in 1892 than had been the case in 1888. Illustrative of the shift was the action of the ardent Republican and former G.A.R. commander, John P. Rea, who announced just before the election that he would support Cleveland.[70]

[68] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 246; "Grand Army of the Republic," *loc. cit.*, 135; Charleston *News and Courier*, quoted in Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 29, 1892; New York *Tribune*, October 15, 1889; George W. Crites to Cleveland, October 21, 1892, Cleveland MSS.

[69] Chicago *Tribune*, November 9, 1892; Dewey, *National Problems*, 250–51.

[70] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 249; Heck, *Civil War Veteran in Minnesota Life and Politics*, 149, 150.

Intensified assaults of the Democratic press upon the extravagant Republican pension policy presaged the new administration's course. Cleveland chose as pension commissioner William Lochren, former G.A.R. advocate general and commander of the Minnesota Loyal Legion. Former Commander Rea had strongly urged Lochren's appointment on the ground that his popularity with the old soldiers would help produce "a more even division" in the soldier vote of the country, with the result that there would not be "a single Republican state West of the Ohio River." But Lochren's prominence in veterans' organizations did not lessen his determination to reduce the bureau's liberality. He abrogated Raum's Order 164, which was operating as an extension of the 1890 act, and established a revision board to reduce or discontinue pensions that Tanner and Raum had granted illegally. By 1894 the Bureau had dropped 2,266 cases and reduced 3,343 to lower ratings; this work continued throughout the administration. Lochren's investigations uncovered frauds in various parts of the country.[71]

Aroused by protests from Republican politicians and press and the veterans' papers, old soldiers fulminated against this purging of the pension list. The Grand Army was particularly bitter and complained querulously throughout Cleveland's administration. The encampment of 1893 asserted that "the officers of the nation have arbitrarily deprived our comrades of their rights" and instructed the commander in chief to make a test case in the courts. Accordingly he contributed three hundred dollars to the cause of a Michigan member whose pension had been reduced from seventy-two to fifty dollars because he was performing his judicial duties and in good health. In 1894 the organization's pension committee denounced "that false economy which shaves and pares to the quick at the expense of honor, justice and patriotism." [72]

[71] *Public Opinion*, XIV, 198, 273, 368, 393, 468, 590; Indianapolis *Journal*, quoted *ibid.*, 198; Rea to Hon. W. V. Hensel, December 24, 1892, Cleveland MSS.; McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 238–41; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 240–41.

[72] *Iowa State Register*, quoted in *Public Opinion*, XIV, 273; *Proceedings 53rd Encampment Pennsylvania G.A.R.*, 1893, p. 214; Washington *National Tribune*, December 8, 15, 22, 29, 1892, issues of 1893, 1894, and 1895; Boston *Grand Army Record*, March, August, 1893; Louis E. Granger to Cleveland, May 30, 1893, Cleveland MSS.; *Proceedings Annual Encampments, Union Veteran Legion of*

Republicans did their utmost to keep this dissatisfaction at a high pitch. William McKinley, one of the less blatant of the "soldiers' friends," emphatically condemned the "universal indictment against pensioners." A major point of Burrows' speeches on the stump in 1894 was the charge that the administration had cut off the pensions of fifteen thousand veterans. Foraker paused long enough in his bloody-shirt waving to satirize the "vetoer." With this encouragement, the grumbling of Grand Army leaders grew louder; Commander in Chief T. G. Lawler announced to the encampment in 1895: ". . . while we are not asking for any new pension legislation, we do ask and insist that when a law is passed . . . that its provisions . . . be carried out and not misapplied by any man . . . or any party. . . ." In 1896 the Grand Army pension committee lobbied for legislation that would check suspensions. Department commanders were outspoken in their condemnation of Cleveland. Some blamed the Pension Bureau's policy upon Secretary of the Interior Hoke Smith, characterized by the South Dakota commander as an "unrepentant rebel who had been employed by your hostile administration to apply a whip of scorpions to the backs of the men who saved the Union." One department called his appointment an "insult to Union soldiers." [73]

Meanwhile the voices of those who advocated a more careful and economical pension administration were mounting in volume, and their arguments received wide publicity. The New York *Times* sent reporters into a number of communities to ferret facts behind pension grants. Their findings, presented in a series of articles, tended to justify the charge that the pension roll was "honeycombed with fraud." Carl Schurz pointed out the weaknesses of the system in a *Harper's Weekly* editorial article:

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the United States, 1891–1903 (Brooklyn, N.Y., 1898–1903), *8th Encampment,* 80; *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 232–38; *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 60, 195, 311.

[73] Indianapolis *American Tribune,* June 22, 1893; Orcutt, *Burrows of Michigan,* II, 26; Chicago *Tribune,* July 5, 1894; Whitlock, *Forty Years of It,* 47; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 54, 315; *30th National Encampment,* 60; *Proceedings 27th Encampment California G.A.R.,* 1894, p. 8; address of Minnesota commander, March 11, 1896, *Proceedings 16th Encampment Minnesota G.A.R.,* 71; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of South Dakota* (1890–1937), *11th Encampment,* 1894, p. 50; *Proceedings 18th Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.,* 16.

> We are paying more for pensions than all other nations together. Our pension expenditure is heavier than the expenditure of the largest military Power on earth for its military establishment.
>
> In the face of these fabulous figures the assertion that our pension system is a worthy monument of the generous gratitude of the American people sounds like a fiendish mockery. We need only to look at its history to conclude that it is rather a monument to the audacity and skill of our public plunderers, to the cowardice of our politicians and to an enduring patience of our general public, which has long ceased to be a virtue. . . . The American people have permitted this preposterous debauch to go on until it not only swallowed up our Treasury surplus, but, however rich this country may be, it actually forces us to borrow money to meet the current expenses of the Government.

Schurz blamed the whole situation on greedy pension attorneys, who had persuaded veterans to demand "more and more extravagant pension legislation," and upon cowardly congressmen who obsequiously granted it. He suggested that the politician might at last realize that his cowardice was stupid. The effort to reform pension abuses might cost him the votes of interested persons, but it would win him the support "of a much greater number of thoughtful and patriotic men." The average American wanted "every deserving soldier who suffered in the war" to have his full share of the "Nation's bounty," but he was not willing to be plundered "by the fraudulent practices of greedy pretenders and speculators." [74]

Schurz's criticism was characteristic of the many complaints that appeared in the press. Moreover, the disappearance of the surplus, as well as the panic of 1893 and the ensuing depression, made further pension grants impossible. Finally, the free-silver question was gradually pushing other issues into the background. Under the circumstances, veterans' leaders found it advisable to modify their ambitious program. During Cleveland's second administration, the Grand Army forgot its legislative proposals to concentrate on its request for liberal interpretation of existing

[74] Carl Schurz, "The Pension Scandal," *Harper's Weekly*, XXXVIII (May 5, 1894), 410.

laws. The insistent demands of the Union Veteran Legion and the Union Veterans' Union dropped to a murmur. But the service-pension movement was by no means dead. The Boston *Grand Army Record* encouraged it, while in 1895 the *National Tribune*, which had been focusing attention on Lochren's suspensions, again adopted the cause in earnest.[75]

More important than the service pension movement in this period was the increasingly vociferous demand for veteran preference in appointments. Immediately after Cleveland's election, the Potomac Department of the G.A.R. and the Veterans' Rights Union busied themselves to prevent wholesale removal of former soldiers. As the inevitable dismissals multiplied, a chorus of protest arose from those two agencies and the *National Tribune*. The G.A.R. encampment of 1893, after listening to Commander Weissert's complaints, requested the President to issue an executive order requiring departments to observe the law on the subject. The encampment of the following year repeated the request and angrily carried its case to the public. The delegates asserted that since the efforts of their officers had failed to prevent the "virtual proscription of members and wards of the G.A.R.," the encampment must appeal to the people for "an expression through the . . . public press, the speeches and writings of public men, and the proceedings of public assemblies." [76]

Although this "expression" never materialized, Grand Army officials made certain that the administration did not forget their demands. They visited the President to plead their cause and extracted a promise that the order would be issued. But Cleveland was unwilling to strangle the floundering civil-service-reform movement by granting unlimited veterans' preference, and in 1895 the unappeased national encampment asked Congress to prescribe a penalty for disregard of the preference statute. Dur-

[75] McMurry, "Civil War Pensions," 250; Boston *Grand Army Record,* August, 1893, May, June, November, 1894.

[76] *Journal 26th Encampment Potomac G.A.R.*, 19, 22, 52–54; *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 51; C. E. Faunce to Cleveland, May 10, 1893, Cleveland MSS.; Kay to *id.*, November 10, 1893, *ibid.; id.* to Hon. John G. Carlisle, November 10, 1893, *ibid.;* Nathan Bickford to Cleveland, June 23, 1894, *ibid.;* T. Fitzgerald and others to *id.*, August 1, 1894, *ibid.;* James F. Meech to *id.*, September 30, 1893, *ibid.;* Thomas G. Lawler to *id.*, November 18, 1894, enclosing resolutions, *ibid.;* Charles T. Rea to *id.*, September 25, 1894, *ibid.;* Chicago *Tribune,* September 13, 14, 1894.

ing 1896 the society's legislative committee lobbied for a bill restricting removal powers of executive chiefs.[77]

These attempts to keep the preference statute in the foreground was only part of the Grand Army's campaign to broaden federal appointment possibilities for servicemen. Commander Veazey had suggested in 1891 that the law granting preference to the disabled be extended to include all veterans, and during the following year the lobbying committee succeeded in getting their bills providing such extension introduced into both houses. Grand Army members were urged to petition Congress for their passage, but the response was distinctly disappointing to the enthusiasts. The result might have been expected; veterans were never so fervent in backing appointment-preference demands as they were at certain periods in supporting the pension movement. This was understandable, since in comparison with the effects of the pension act preference legislation would benefit only a few. But the G.A.R. lobbyists overlooked the indifference of the rank-and-file in assigning causes for the failure of the bill. Complaining that neither house had even reported on the measure, the committee asserted to the national encampment in 1894, "This can hardly be wondered at when we reflect that men who fought to destroy the Union, now dominate and control in both legislative branches of the National Government. . . . Such men do not understand . . . the meaning of Patriotism. . . . They are not Americans." [78]

Republican victories in 1894 brought the zealots no encouragement; six preference bills died a quiet death. Neither were veterans' champions more successful in winning better observance of Section 1754. This they blamed upon the Civil Service Commission, which had gained extension of its principles to so many government positions.

Grand Army officers waged aggressive warfare upon the civil-service movement in the states, and in some cases they succeeded.

[77] C. C. Jones to Cleveland, May 8, 1895, Cleveland MSS.; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 58, 314; *30th Encampment*, 199.

[78] *Journal 25th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 59; *26th Encampment*, 83–84; *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 190–91; *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 188, 253; Washington *National Tribune*, March 7, 1892, August 2, 1894, January 31, 1895.

In 1888 the Ohio legislature passed an act favoring the former soldier, but Grand Army members complained that it was often evaded. Kansas veterans made similar complaints about their state law. In New York, birthplace of the preference movement, the agitators were most successful; the legislature provided that veterans should receive preference in appointments and promotions without regard to their standing on the examination list. Massachusetts passed a similar law, but the governor vetoed it on the ground that it would be a severe blow to the system of civil service reform.[79]

The Grand Army's campaign for patriotism had imbued members with such respect for "law and order" that they were eager to follow their leaders in actively opposing the violent disorders resulting from widespread unemployment. They were undoubtedly influenced also by the constant emphasis of their officers and the veterans' press upon the necessity for protecting the economic status quo. The business depression of 1893 threw hundreds of thousands out of work; and as discontent surged among the unemployed, property holders grew apprehensive. Increasing threats of disorder alarmed some G.A.R. leaders. The Pennsylvania commander issued an order to posts announcing, "Should scenes of turbulence . . . unfortunately reach within the borders of our own great State . . . the boys who wore the blue will be found on the side of America and its institutions." The Oregon encampment pledged itself to oppose "all violent anarchical and revolutionary movements tending to the subversion of our free institutions." [80]

The first manifestation of intensified restlessness was the peaceful march upon Washington of a horde of unemployed under

[79] Woods, "G.A.R. and Civil Service," IV, 76–89; Fish, *Civil Service and the Patronage*, 238; Noyes, "Ohio G.A.R. and Politics," *loc. cit.*, 100; Washington *National Tribune*, January 31, 1895, February 14, 1897; *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 188; *Nation*, XLIV (1887), 519; Boston *Grand Army Record*, June, 1895.

[80] *Journal 26th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 67; Washington *National Tribune*, July 18, 21, 1892; Boston *Grand Army Record*, May, 1892; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 8," Philadelphia, March 7, 1894, p. 16; *Proceedings 13th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, 1894, p. 680; *A Sermon Delivered by Rev. John W. Sayers . . . at the Encampment of the Department of Pennsylvania Grand Army of the Republic, Gettysburg, Pa.* (pamphlet, n.p., 1894?) Library of Congress, 14–16.

Jacob S. Coxey to demand that the government expand the monetary medium and provide a program of public works. The Indianapolis *American Tribune* ridiculed this futile demonstration, but veterans in general took no interest in the matter.[81]

The situation changed with the outbreak of the Pullman strike, which resulted in a boycott upon Pullman cars in twenty-seven states and territories from Cincinnati to San Francisco. When violence broke out near Chicago and Governor John P. Altgeld hesitated to call out the state militia, the President took immediate action. On the ground that the strikers were obstructing the mails, interfering with federal court procedure, and hampering interstate commerce, he ordered regular troops to the scenes of disturbance. In this crisis threatening violence over economic issues, party lines faded, and frightened conservatives of both parties shouted Cleveland's praises.[82] Foremost among those who momentarily deserted the opposition ranks were the Grand Army leaders.

When the President announced his position, the soldiers' press as well as G.A.R. officials ceased attacking his Pension Bureau policy and his refusal to sanction unlimited veteran preference. The soldiers' papers turned their volleys against the strikers, while to Cleveland they gave only the highest praise for performing his "patriotic" duty. The Boston *Grand Army Record* termed the strikers' activities "a crime against society hardly second to that of outright robbery and even of murder" and characterized their leader, Eugene V. Debs, as "a periodical drunkard of delirium tremens fame." The Washington *National Tribune* used equally strong expressions and addressed a glowing open letter to Cleveland. "You did your plain, obvious duty. . . . The *National Tribune* is second to none in its cordial approval of your acts." The Indianapolis *American Tribune* endorsed the President's step as "wise, timely, and patriotic" and termed the striker a "luminous ass." The paper scorned Altgeld's contention that Cleveland had not given the state authorities opportunity to solve their own problem: "This is the same States Rights rot that was the cause of

[81] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, April 26, May 10, 1893; Robert W. Potts to Cleveland, April 27, 1894, Cleveland MSS.

[82] New York *Tribune*, July 15, 1894; Chicago *Tribune*, July 12, 1894.

the rebellion. . . . Even the Southern press has been outspoken in favor of the enforcement of the Federal government, showing that the South can be counted on as a conservative power." William McKinley echoed these sentiments in his Fourth of July oration at the dedication of a soldiers' monument, while Sickles, increasingly the soldiers' favorite, declared that the situation made his "blood boil." Rioters, he said, "must be taught a salutary and lasting lesson . . . no temporizing should be tolerated." [83]

Western department officers urged their members to take a strong stand against the strikers. The commander of the Department of Washington and Alaska instructed his posts to "take such action as may place them unequivocally before the public, and especially before law-breakers, as the enemies of lawlessness. . . ." From Colorado, the strike-torn mining area, came the pronouncement: ". . . this is rebellion, varying only in degree from that which came so near effecting the total destruction of our government. . . ." The Oregon commander assured his posts that it was no time for the society to discuss theories. When the "hour of action" came and he called them to their duty, he promised, he would stand by their side, "a grenadier." [84]

During the second week in July, while violence was still rife in Chicago, many posts responded to these appeals. Some, mainly in the West, sent resolutions to the President offering armed assistance against the strikers, while others sent similar offers to governors or to department headquarters. The Indianapolis *American Tribune* announced that posts were deluging its offices with endorsements of Cleveland's action; the Chicago *Tribune* reported that the old soldiers were "stirred up." Believing that they had settled "certain disputed questions" forever, "they witness now with pained surprise an era of lawlessness which resembles in many of its features what they saw in 1861. . . . These men will turn out if necessary, and their sons will turn out with them. . . . The

[83] Boston *Grand Army Record*, July, 1894; Washington *National Tribune*, July 12, 19, 1894; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 5, 12, 19, 1894; Chicago *Tribune*, July 5, 11, 1894.

[84] "Circular No. 2," Port Townsend, Wash., July 10, 1894, *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Washington and Alaska* (1888–1918), *13th Encampment*, 98; order of N. Rollins, quoted in Washington *National Tribune*, December 6, 1894; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 5," Portland, Oregon, July 21, 1894, pp. 73–74.

soldiers of 1861 are as ready to fight Anarchist rebels north of the Ohio as they were secession rebels south of it." [85]

And as a matter of fact many members went beyond belligerent resolutions. Hundreds of old Illinois boys were sworn in as federal deputy marshals to guard mail trains; Chicago members offered themselves to authorities as a special force for suppressing rioters. Indianapolis posts, assembled to endorse Cleveland, enrolled several companies to assist in maintaining order. The Oregon commander remarked, "The business of guarding trains is not forgotten by the comrades in this department, nor will it be." The Illinois commander, thanking members for their support, declared that he had "good reason to believe that the part taken by the 'Grand Army Veterans' in our State, had much to do with the final suppression of the riot and disorder . . . their willingness to aid in saving from destruction the principles of the best and most generous government on earth, acted as a mighty deterrent to the rebellious element." [86]

At the national encampment in September, Commander in Chief John G. B. Adams commented officially on the organization's role in the crisis. "I made no tender of service of our Order to the President . . . and issued no call to my comrades; yet my ear was to the ground. . . . Had the men on duty been unable to restore law and order, I should have called on the Grand Army . . . and am confident that every comrade able to bear arms would have responded." [87]

[85] H. W. Miller to Cleveland, July 9, 1894, Cleveland MSS.; H. A. Chapin to *id.*, July 10, 1894, *ibid.;* J. F. Zeckliker to *id.*, July 10, 1894, *ibid.;* O. L. Spalding to *id.*, July 11, 1894, *ibid.;* L. C. Way to *id.*, July 11, 1894, *ibid.;* J. D. Butler to *id.*, July 12, 1894, *ibid.;* C. W. Fitzsimmons to *id.*, July 12, 1894, *ibid.;* Fred Cuzner to *id.*, July 13, 1894, *ibid.;* B. F. Shields to *id.*, July 13, 1894, *ibid.;* W. C. Johnson to McKinley, July 11, 1894, *ibid.;* Mrs. Edward Roby to Cleveland, July 12, 1894, *ibid.; Proceedings 29th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 4," Chicago, July 30, 1894, p. 183; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, 32; *Proceedings 13th Encampment Washington and Alaska G.A.R.*, 25; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 19, 1894; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, Report of Department Inspector Alexander L. Whitehead of Illinois, 133; Washington *National Tribune*, July 12, 1894; New York *Tribune*, July 9, 1894; Chicago *Tribune*, July 9, 10, 15, 1894.

[86] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 12, 1894; New York *Tribune*, July 9, 1894; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, address of S. B. Ormsby, 32; *Proceedings 29th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 5," Chicago, 183.

[87] *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 63; Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, quoted in Indianapolis *American Tribune*, August 9, 1894.

No poll was ever taken, however, to determine the majority opinion of members throughout the country. Officers of the 1894 encampment were unwilling to submit for discussion a resolution condemning strikes and calling for vigorous punishment of those responsible for mob violence. New York City's Lafayette Post presented such an expression to the resolutions committee, but the latter recommended that it be tabled on the ground that the commander's address covered the matter. The committee feared, the New York *Tribune* reported, that the resolution "might, if favorably referred to the encampment, lead to something being said that might better be unsaid and possibly create a discussion that would not be desirable." The motion to table the resolution passed by a majority of one vote.[88]

Occasional condemnatory expressions against the rioters continued to come from veterans' leaders and the soldiers' press. The *National Tribune* urged "wide extension of the Sons of Veterans" into a "position of commanding influence," so that its "moral power" might be effective against Debs and his cohorts. But once the crisis was passed, Grand Army officials and veterans' papers returned in general to their interrupted task of denouncing Cleveland. The Indianapolis *American Tribune* placed responsibility for the whole affair upon the administration, which had caused "business stagnation, general suffering and an old fashioned Kilkenny cat fight." The journal pointed out that G.A.R. members had sprung to assist a Democratic President in suppressing violence, although many "were laboring men, and not a few were in sympathy with the original strikers. . . . Will a Democratic President and a Democratic Congress, in the face of this demonstration, continue to treat the old soldiers as they have treated them in past years?" The *American Tribune* believed that it would be only "fair play" to reward the veterans with a pension bill.[89]

The Grand Army, after having reached its peak membership in 1890, slowly declined. Death accounted for but a small part of the society's losses; of the 56,956 dropped from the rolls in

[88] New York *Tribune*, September 14, 1894; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 62, 63, 254.

[89] Chicago *Herald*, January 26, 1895, clipping in Fairchild MSS.; Washington *National Tribune*, December 27, 1894, January 10, June 13, September 26, 1895; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 26, August 9, 1894.

1895, only 7,368 were garnered by the Grim Reaper. The large net loss in 1894 might have resulted from the depression; many department officers attributed their discouraging figures to the general financial distress. A Texas officer, however, reported that "a great lack of interest and enthusiasm" prevailed among the members. And in 1896 the Arizona commander reported that many on the suspension list were financially able to pay their dues. The Tennessee commander commented: ". . . our ranks have constantly lessened from pure desertion. . . . information from post commanders, shows that the larger proportion of the deserters are men who are drawing liberal pensions." Such complaints indicate that after winning the pension bill of 1890 many members saw no further purpose in the organization, and drifted from its ranks. One department commander told his encampment, "There are hundreds who enrolled themselves in our organization in order that the fact of their membership in the Grand Army might be an aid to them in securing pensions, and now, having been placed on the pension roll, they do not care whether the bridge that helped them over remains standing or not." Others who remained in the society grew indifferent; officers complained of the waning enthusiasm displayed at post meetings and department encampments. By 1896 membership had diminished to 340,610.[90]

One phase of the Grand Army's ebbing power was a growing hostility against other veterans' societies. Many members regarded the existence of smaller associations as an important reason for the G.A.R.'s decline and considered them rivals. At the Union Veteran Legion's national encampment of 1892, the commander commented: ". . . our correspondence shows that the membership of the G.A.R. is, in the main, strongly inimical to our order, and that almost any means will be availed of towards its suppres-

[90] Boston *Grand Army Record*, October, 1896; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 67, 128, 132; *34th National Encampment*, 83, 85; *28th National Encampment*, 9, 131, 149, 156; *30th National Encampment*, 56; *33rd National Encampment*, 84–85; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Arizona G.A.R.* (1888–1905), 1896, p. 8; "Commander's Address," *Proceedings 15th Encampment Tennessee G.A.R.*, 1898, p. 46; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Tennessee G.A.R.*, 1899, p. 43; *14th Encampment*, 67; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Colorado and Wyoming G.A.R.*, 7; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1897, p. 40.

sion." After 1885, when the Loyal Legion began expanding westward from its few eastern commanderies, Grand Army hostility increased with the growth of the officers' society. Opposition first came to the surface in California, where the Grand Army adopted resolutions condemning the Legion for upholding an "aristocracy of army officers." Irritation spread among the members; many determined to work against any Legion member who ran for a G.A.R. position.[91]

Another concomitant of waning strength was the increase of factional disputes; the quarrel over Negro posts was only one of several serious differences of opinion. Some members condemned national headquarters for failing to press the service pension cause. In Massachusetts the Boston *Grand Army Record* sponsored a "democratic" movement which was designed to give greater control to the rank and file. The *Record* denounced the practice of permitting all past department commanders to vote as delegates at national encampments, and characterized these officers as an aristocratic "house of lords." This view soon prevailed in the Massachusetts Department, which in 1894 and 1895 unsuccessfully urged the national encampment to deprive past commanders of their votes. The *Record* spread dissatisfaction also by charging that the national office was extravagant in its expenditures, and by insisting that the organization had always been managed for the "prime purpose of advancing private personal interests." [92]

Leaders met the problem of declining membership in various ways. Many hoped to replace waning interest in the pension movement with enthusiasm for the organization's intensified patriotic crusade. The *National Tribune* repeatedly begged members to engage in recruiting activities. National headquarters began combining the smaller departments and for dwindling post membership adopted the plan of "picket posts." In the early 1890's the

[91] *Proceedings 7th National Encampment Union Veteran Legion,* 14–15; "General Orders No. 12," John M. Palmer, Albany, N.Y., August 15, 1892, in Boston *Grand Army Record,* August, 1892; W. H. Kenney to Vilas, with enclosed circular, December 10, 1892, Vilas MSS.; Chicago *Tribune,* September 28, 1887.

[92] Boston *Grand Army Record,* November, 1891, February, 1892, July, October, December, 1893, February, March, September, October, 1894, February, September, 1895, October, 1896, September, 1897, April, May, July, August, 1898; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 337–38.

Tennessee commander tried to hold members living great distances from post halls by sanctioning their absence from meetings with the understanding that they assemble elsewhere to pay their dues. After the national encampment approved this plan in 1893, it spread, with modifications, to other states. In 1896 the encampment again endorsed the project and recommended the Minnesota plan, which divided members into resident and nonresident groups. The latter paid one-half the amount of dues and elected a sergeant to preside over meetings held at their convenience in their own homes. Some of the boys who were growing too old to enjoy traveling may have been held on the rolls by this device.[93]

To the close of the century Grand Army men, spurred to continued hostility by their textbook campaign, gave little evidence of friendliness for the South. The veterans' press stimulated this enmity by angrily publicizing every aggressive rationalization of the Lost Cause, and other journals sometimes joined the attack. On one occasion the Chicago *Tribune*, irritated because military-institute cadets had paraded in Atlanta behind a Confederate flag, remarked that the city needed "the Grand Army to go there and show it the only flag behind which the cadets ever should march." These sentiments were reflected at G.A.R. gatherings; former President Hayes recorded with regret a disposition at the 1891 encampment "to scold the South—to discuss irritating topics in an ill-tempered way." This was the encampment that objected to the federal purchase of Chickamauga battlefield and condemned the growing southern penchant for erecting "Rebel" monuments. In 1891 members were particularly angry over the Memorial Day dedication of a Chicago monument to Confederate dead. The *National Tribune* supported these objections with the complaint that the memorial would confuse the rising generation as to "plain matters of right and wrong." [94]

Hayes was by no means the only member who deprecated the majority's refusal to condone the South's sentimentalism over its

[93] Washington *National Tribune*, September 31, October 14, 1887, October 4, 17, 24, 31, 1895; *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 148; *Journal 30th Encampment*, 22, 179, 181, 250.

[94] Washington *National Tribune*, May 25, June 5, 1893, June 7, 14, 21, 28, July 12, 1894, May 30, June 27, 1895; Boston *Grand Army Record*, October, 1894; Chicago *Tribune*, May 31, June 1, 4, 1894; Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Hayes*, V, 1–2; Noyes, "History of the G.A.R. in Ohio," 221.

tragic past; the choice of Louisville, Kentucky, for the encampment of 1895 was a concession to northern as well as southern members who favored friendlier relations between the sections. Many Grand Army men journeyed to the gathering with warm feelings for the South, while southern newspapers welcomed the organization's visit as proof that the "bitterness and hate which followed the close of the war" was "fast disappearing." [95]

But this effort on the part of Union veterans to clasp the hands of their one-time foes caused some unfavorable comment. One member, declaring through the columns of the Boston *Grand Army Record* that the choice of meeting place was a great mistake, termed it "a long step in that policy of obliteration which has grown to such disgraceful proportions. . . ." The *Record* expressed horror at the commander in chief's announcement that the encampment's official badges would be made from blended Union and Confederate cannon. The Louisville *Times* generously urged,

> Grand Army men what do you think,
> The Star-eyed Goddess gives the wink,
> Come, fellows, nominate your drink—
> Kentucky does the treating.
> Let's lull past discords unto sleep,
> Store our big battles in one heap
> And drown them all three fingers deep—
> Kentucky does this treating.

But the *Record* accused the South of characterizing the "sacred war" as a "brawl in which you were as much wrong as those you thought were traitors." [96]

The southern press replied to these attacks with charges that the Grand Army's emphasis upon "patriotism" was a mere cloak for mercenary motives. The Memphis *Commercial Appeal* declared: ". . . the organization as a whole is one of the worst and

[95] *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 6, 8; Florida *Times-Union*, undated, quoted *ibid.*, 452; Washington *National Tribune*, September 19, 1885; Davies, "A History of American Veterans' and Hereditary Patriotic Societies 1783–1900," I, 405; Andrews, *History of the Last Quarter Century*, II, 356; Noyes, "History of the G.A.R. in Ohio," 220.

[96] Buck, *Road to Reunion*, 240; Boston *Grand Army Record*, June, July, September, 1895.

most harmful that has ever existed in this country. The very fact that it has been able to disarm patriot hearts has made it all the more powerful for evil, for it has thus been able to prostitute the noblest emotions . . . to the basest ends. It has made a merchandise of patriotism and a commodity of valor. . . ." [97]

A plan formulated early in 1896 to hold a "blue and gray" parade in New York City as a July 4 demonstration of national unity clearly indicated the Grand Army's attitude toward its former enemies. The New York press urged the project as a friendly gesture not only to the city's ten thousand Confederate-veteran inhabitants but also to its southern customers. Charles A. Dana, chairman of the arrangements committee, requested the endorsement of Ivan N. Walker, G.A.R. commander in chief. Walker consented to permit the members' participation provided no Confederate flag appeared. Dana agreed but stated that the former Confederates would march in their gray uniforms. The Commander declared the Confederate uniform as objectionable as the flag and announced, "We cannot, as an organization, join in any public demonstration and march with those who fought against the Union clad in a uniform which was shot to death by the Grand Army of the Republic, thirty years ago." His position forced the disappointed committee to abandon the project. The commander received considerable press criticism for his decision, but posts and members overwhelmed him with praise. After thirty years of haranguing from politicians and veterans' leaders, many G.A.R. men were firmly convinced that sympathy for the vanquished southerners and the ideas of a Debs were equally subversive of American institutions.[98]

[97] Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, quoted in Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 20, 1895; Richmond *Dispatch*, quoted in Chicago *Tribune*, June 1, 1894.

[98] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 17, December 19, 1895; Washington *National Tribune*, March 5, 1896; Charles A. Dana to I. N. Walker, December 16, 1895; Walker to Dana, December 30, 1895; *id.* to *id.*, January 6, 1896; *id.* to *id.*, January 13, 1896; *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 57–60; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Minnesota G.A.R.*, 169.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Patriotic Mission

CLEAR INDICATIONS that Republicans would make a vigorous effort to recoup their losses among the old soldiers appeared in the blasts against Cleveland's Pension Bureau and veterans' preference policy. Through 1893 the soldiers' papers battled incessantly against the President. These journals pointed to Republican victories that autumn as evidence of veterans' disgust for Cleveland. They begged soldiers to reward William McKinley with Ohio's gubernatorial chair for his open opposition to the Democratic pension system and hailed as a "soldier victory" the election of John Palmer, former Grand Army commander in chief, as New York's governor.[1]

During 1894 the veterans' press was even more vehement in its exhortations. The Washington *National Tribune*, concentrating once more on the tariff issue, pronounced the cause of tariff reform a "vicious conspiracy of the dominant class in the South against the peace and prosperity of the rest of the country." The journal begged veterans "to forego all other considerations this Fall, and vote only for Republican nominees for Congress." Democrats, it pointed out, were committed to a limited pension list, while the eleven Populist congressmen had shown no disposition to favor veterans. "Rightly or wrongly, the Republicans stand before the country as representative of liberal pensions. . . ." The Indianapolis *American Tribune* asserted that Pension Commissioner Lochren was only waiting for the 1894 elections to drop fifty thousand pensioners from the rolls. Again Republican victories were proclaimed a vindication of the pensioners' cause.

[1] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, June 22, November 9, 16, 23, 28, 1893; Woods, "G.A.R. and Civil Service," 83.

The *National Tribune* was particularly joyful over the result in Kansas, which, it declared, was finally "emerging from the vagaries of Populism." [2]

The Grand Army had wheeled once more into Republican columns. Department officials seized every opportunity to condemn Cleveland's attitude toward the veterans, and department resolutions endorsed these pronouncements. Leaders did not consider their expressions political; the organization was merely trying to protect the veteran's "vested right" in pensions. One member urged, "Comrades, the time has come . . . when the old soldiers should stand together, fight and vote as they did in days of yore, vote for the interest of the soldier. . . . Why should we care for that party that does not care for us? The party that treats us with contempt cannot, and should not receive our support." An occasional endorsement of Democratic policy appeared, but in general G.A.R. expressions censured the administration.[3]

Democrats made no direct reply to these arguments, although a few party leaders expressed alarm as their soldier-recruits of 1892 drifted into Republican ranks. The Pennsylvania committee chairman wrote, "I gathered from the letters I have received that a very large number of the Democratic voters have left the party permanently on the pension question. I think but a small proportion of the Democratic soldiers in Pennsylvania still remain Democratic voters." A Pennsylvania editor told Cleveland, "The soldier has not been recognized by your Administration and he is not recognized by Chairman Harrity. He has no use for an old soldier. . . . Is it to be wondered at that the Democratic party is losing the soldier vote? There was a time—three years ago—when we had over 20,000 Democratic ex-soldiers in Pennsylvania. A great majority have gone to the other side." Just before the presidential campaign, Cleveland relieved his party of Lochren's burdensome unpopularity by naming him a federal judge. The new

[2] Washington *National Tribune*, November 9, 1893, February 22, May 3, August 16, 30, September 13, October 4, 11, 18, 26, November 8, 15, 28, 1894; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 18, 25, November 1, 8, 1894.

[3] Charles A. Foster (comp.), *Minutes of the G.A.R., Department of Delaware: Reminiscences and Special Instruction on Patriotism* (Wilmington, 1907), 15, 16; Boston *Grand Army Record*, June, 1893; Allen R. Foote, "The Decisive Breach in the Grand Army," in *Forum*, XV (1893), 452–58; *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 147.

commissioner, D. I. Murphy, immediately ordered that no pensioners be dropped arbitrarily and that the fact of enlistment be accepted as proof against preservice disability. This was the only Democratic concession to the veterans' dissatisfaction; administration leaders were too distracted by the alarming spread of free-silver doctrines within their party to concentrate on the problem of holding the soldier-grumblers.[4]

The steadily developing economic dissatisfaction of the post-war period finally found real political expression when the free-silver advocates seized control of the Democratic party machinery. These rebels against the status quo, including in their ranks many western veterans, were like the reformers of 1872 in that they made no bid for servicemen as a separate class. The platform ignored them save for an endorsement of Commissioner Murphy's liberal regulations. In the campaign textbook one chapter, devoted to an earnest defense of Democratic pension policy, declared that under Democratic control the Pension Bureau had dropped "wholesale frauds" and rectified unfair ratings. Having thus justified its position, the party made little further direct appeal to veterans except in reply to Republican charges. It relied upon the free-silver issue and Candidate William Jennings Bryan to draw the old soldiers. West of the Mississippi, Democrats had considerable success; veterans' Bryan clubs rapidly developed under the guidance of local workers.[5]

Although soldiers' organizations and the veterans' press had resumed aggressive agitation for service pensions, the question of further grants was not an issue. Republican platform promises were vague. "Wherever practicable," former soldiers should receive preference in employment, and they were "entitled to the enactment of such laws" as would be "best calculated to secure the fulfillment of the pledges made to them in the dark days of the country's peril." Politicians did not strengthen this plank with definite commitments but emphasized the platform's denunciation

[4] Wright to Grier, quoted in Grier to Cleveland, December 3, 1895, Cleveland MSS.; E. J. Atkinson to Hon. Charles Tracey, May 23, 1895, *ibid.;* New York *Tribune*, May 16, 1896.

[5] James A. Barnes, "Myths of the Bryan Campaign," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXIV (1947), 368–69; *Democratic Party, Campaign Text Book* (Washington, 1896), 5, 252–69; *Republican Party, Campaign Text Book* (Washington, 1896), 251; Washington *National Tribune*, June 28, 1900.

of the Pension Bureau for "reducing pensions and arbitrarily dropping names from the rolls." [6] The implication was that under Republicans the veterans would enjoy more liberal treatment in the administration of existing laws and in appointments.

Republicans made the most of William McKinley's leading position on the ticket in appealing to old soldiers. He was on hand at the Ohio Grand Army encampment and made a speech. Even before his nomination, the "Major's" participation in his post's Memorial Day services was publicized. The Minneapolis *Tribune*, frustrated because McKinley had refused to speak on that occasion, republished his three-year-old Memorial Day address at New York's Metropolitan Opera House. Republican papers made much of the fact that McKinley was the only soldier-candidate for the presidency who had enlisted as a private, and repeatedly reviewed his military career.[7]

The party sent trainloads of aging veterans to visit its candidate; and on these occasions, McKinley, like Harrison, made brief addresses. He revived the "glorious memories of the war" and rejoiced that its bitterness had "long since disappeared." In proof of this contention he cited the G.A.R. encampment at Louisville, the Chickamauga Park dedication, and a "blue and gray" assembly in Atlanta. McKinley had dropped the bloody shirt; his appeal to veterans was based on other grounds. His party, he promised, would pay their pensions in gold: "There is nobody more interested in maintaining a sound and stable currency than the old soldiers." His arguments had an emotional as well as a mercenary aspect: Soldiers must unite in "maintaining the credit of the country they served so well"; in the impending crisis they must rally to its support "as they did thirty-five years ago and defend the Nation with ballots as they did with muskets when they were young men." [8]

Republican papers echoed the statement that it was the soldier's duty to "preserve national honor" by voting down free silver, but

[6] *Republican Campaign Text Book*, 1896, pp. 236, 242; Chicago *Tribune*, June 19, 1886.

[7] *Proceedings 30th Encampment Ohio G.A.R.*, 1896, p. 196; Minneapolis *Tribune*, June 7, 9, 1896; Chicago *Tribune*, May 31, 1896.

[8] New York *Tribune*, July 17, August 1, 14, September 30, 1896; Minneapolis *Tribune*, August 14, 1896; Chicago *Tribune*, July 18, 1896.

their real appeal was to his pocketbook. The New York *Tribune*, for example, announced that the triumph of free silver would mean the payment of every pension at the rate of fifty-three cents on the dollar: "It has been reserved until the present time for a great political party to declare war against the whole pension system and to put forward as the leading issue of the campaign a proposal to repudiate the nation's debt to its defenders." [9]

The Chicago *Tribune*, harping on this theme in long editorials, added the assertion that this was precisely the aim of southern Democrats. "The South, which would have a good deal to say under a Democratic free coinage administration," would chuckle over this cutting down of pensions from $140,000,000 to $70,000,000. The paper asked the sixty-eight thousand Illinois pensioners if they were willing to see their payments cut in half. Just before the election it made a final appeal in an editorial headed, "Stand to your Guns, Old Soldiers." The call to battle, said the *Tribune*, was "to meet an insidious foe . . . whose success augurs as much disaster to your country as the ravages of bloody battle. . . . Never, since the rough edge of battle joined in 1861, were loyalty and honor more justly appealed to than now. The Republican party has courageously unfurled 'Old Glory,' and called on you to support it. . . . Your own interest, the interest of your immediate family and friends, the peace, prosperity, and honor of this people and nation all demand at this crisis the decided triumph of the Republican party. . . ." [10]

Perhaps the greatest Republican advantage so far as soldiers were concerned was the party's control of veterans' papers. The Indianapolis *American Tribune*, which had begun as early as February 12, 1895, to urge McKinley's nomination, ardently espoused the Republican cause. The paper boasted that two hundred thousand copies went to Kansas, Nebraska, Michigan and Indiana, while the *National Tribune* was also distributed widely to non-subscribers.[11] These journals emphasized three points so whole-

[9] Chicago *Tribune*, July 18, 1896; New York *Tribune*, August 1, September 11, 1896.

[10] Chicago *Tribune*, June 15, July 9, 18, August 13, October 23, November 3, 1896.

[11] Washington *National Tribune*, August 27, 1896; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 8, 1896.

heartedly that they neglected Cleveland's Pension Bureau and veteran preference policies.

The first argument was similar to that of the regular Republican press: that a Democratic victory would mean the reduction in the value of pensions by almost one-half. The *National Tribune* declared: ". . . a large part of the animus of the Free Silver movement is a raid of the soldier-haters against pensions. What a great victory it would be for the soldier-haters if they could see Free Silver prevail, the value of the dollar cut in two, and every pension on the roll reduced one-half. . . . It is the old gang, under a new flag, trying to get past our flank. . . ." The papers claimed that Bryan had never done anything for veterans while in Congress and was admittedly opposed to liberal pensions.[12]

The second argument proceeded from the charge that the actual forces controlling the Democratic party were those which in 1861 had led the nation into disaster. Bryan was a mere figurehead; behind him were the old southern leaders: "A million graves testify to the danger of following them. A section . . . mournfully in the rear of true American progress, too well illustrates the blasting effects of their domination at home. It is madness to think that these men could lead you to prosperity." [13]

The third argument reminded veterans of their patriotic duty against the forces of anarchy and national dishonor and asserted that Bryan represented those forces. In 1861, said the *National Tribune*, the enemy's flag had represented secession, slavery, and financial ruin; in 1896 it represented "Repudiation, Anarchy and Financial Ruin." The *American Tribune* insisted that the issue before veterans was that of patriotism and loyalty against the dangerous doctrines of the Bryan "anarchists and cranks." [14]

This propaganda of two outstanding veterans' papers was addressed particularly to the western soldier population, which was evidencing a disposition to follow the silver-tongued Bryan into the Democratic fold. The *National Tribune* published open letters

[12] Washington *National Tribune*, July 16, 30, August 20, 1896; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 1, 8, 15, 29, 1896.

[13] Washington *National Tribune*, July 16, 30, September 24, October 1, 15, 29, 1896.

[14] *Ibid.*, October 1, 1894, October 29, 1896; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 8, 15, 1896; Boston *Grand Army Record*, October, 1896.

to these "errant straying comrades" warning that they had more to fear from the Democratic party than had been the case in 1892: "Many of you allowed yourselves to be fooled by the tariff reform to the injury of yourselves and your comrades—are you going to be fooled by the same gang into the worse delusion of free coinage?" [15]

But many western veterans, indifferent to these entreaties, flooded the *National Tribune*'s office with letters ranging "from mild expostulation to rabid denunciation." From Nebraska a soldier wrote, "Thousands of the old boys who followed Grant through the Wilderness and Sherman to the sea will be found voting for Billy Bryan. . . ." Another veteran wrote, "You are doing valiant service for the bond-holder, the money-lord, the opulent rich classes of the land under pretense of helping the pensioner; and while you affect to stand by the pensioner, you simply hold him up while the money-lending highwayman goes through his impoverished pockets. . . . How much would the Kansas pensioner gain or lose under free coinage when his mortgage is considered? Have a little mercy on our debt-ridden comrades out West, and even here in old Keystone." [16]

Republican leaders, haunted by free silver's attraction for the veteran, hurriedly revived the old veterans' clubs of bygone campaigns. In July, L. Edwin Dudley, indefatigable veterans' organizer of the 1870's, asked General Sickles' co-operation in beginning the work. The one-legged general enthusiastically assented, and the two formed the Veterans' National Committee. From his headquarters in New York City, Dudley directed organizational work and distributed circulars; soon branches of the Union Veterans' Patriotic League were springing up throughout the country. Dudley wrote, "The veterans and sons of veterans are responding in the most enthusiastic manner. . . . We are appealing to the old sentiments of loyalty and patriotism and especially to the love and affection which the old veterans have for their comrade, Major McKinley. It is not our object to discuss the issues of the campaign to any great extent . . . but we are endeavoring to muster the

[15] Washington *National Tribune*, September 3, 24, October 15, 1896.

[16] *Ibid.*, September 24, 1896; R. A. Williams to editor, *ibid.*, October 8, 1896; J. H. Stevenson to editor, *ibid.*, August 27, 1896.

old soldiers . . . touching elbows, as they did in the war time." [17]

But the leaders were not content to rely entirely on sentimental bonds; Sickles' September circular was a "ringing" indictment of Bryan and an attempted refutation of his program. Again the argument appeared that a Democratic victory would mean a reduction of payments to pensioners, the government's creditors. Further, the irascible old campaigner accused Bryan of reviving sectional hatred; he was trying to combine the South and West against the North and East: "This is sectionalism—of which the Rebellion was the offspring. Union veterans . . . can never favor any candidate . . . seeking to array one section . . . against another." Response to the League's effort was encouraging. One club leader declared, "We, the Vets feel that we are fighting with ballots now that which we fought with powder . . . and are *very* enthusiastic." [18]

Republican appeals to old soldiers were so insistent that at length Bryan felt impelled to give them attention. In September he stated in his letter of acceptance, "The care of those who have suffered injury in the military and naval service of the country is a sacred duty." In September, too, he challenged Republican charges. "I am not afraid," he declared at Milwaukee, "that any man who risked his life in the Nation's behalf is going to be influenced by the arguments that are addressed to the soldiers now by the financiers who, during the war, were looking out for themselves and letting the soldier look out for himself. I am not afraid . . . that these men are going to allow the hosts of the gold standard to enslave seventy millions of people, whites and blacks, in this country." In his Ohio speeches Bryan challenged Republicans to find "a single evidence" in his congressional record of hostility to veterans. And again he shouted,

> The same financiers who are attempting to scare the soldiers today by the threat of a fifty-cent dollar are the same financiers who made their bonds payable in coin while the

[17] Chicago *Tribune*, July 23, 26, 1896; New York *Tribune*, July 31, 1896; Dudley to Chandler, August 25, 1896, W. E. Chandler MSS.; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 22, 1896.

[18] Chicago *Tribune*, September 19, 1896; Symmes H. Hunt to John C. Spooner, October 24, 1896, John C. Spooner MSS. (1874–1907), Library of Congress; O. L. Barbour to *id.*, July 27, 1896, *ibid.*

> soldier was paid in forty-cent dollars. The soldiers will remember that when they passed through the war the financier was not the friend of the soldiers. I challenge you to read the pages of our history and find a single instance where the money changers have ever had any use for them except to stand them up to be shot at, while they were making money. The soldier who was willing to fight for his country then when his pay was in dollars worth forty cents, compared with the bondholders' money, will be willing to take his chances now under a system that gives the soldier and bondholder the same kind of a dollar.[19]

The Chicago *Tribune* scorned these replies: "What harm has the gold-standard done the old soldiers that they should look on themselves as slaves . . . ? Bryan wishes the veterans to join the 'hosts of the silver standard.' What would that standard do for them?" The paper discounted the orator's fulminations against financiers as a mere evasion of the issue: "The pensioner and the bondholder get the same kind of a dollar now, and it is a good dollar. Does the former hate the latter so much that he is ready to accept a half value dollar in order that the bondholder may be defrauded likewise by being forced to accept the same cheap dollar? . . . Bryan . . . advises the veterans to imitate Samson, pull down the temple, and crush themselves as well as the 'money changers.' " [20]

But veterans' clubs and disdain for Bryan's oratory seemed inadequate to win western soldiers from the silver heresy. In September, when Republicans faced the alarming prospect of defeat, the soldiers' vote assumed even greater importance. Leaders prevailed upon Mark Hanna to send a group of prominent veterans through the West on a speaking tour, and accordingly a special train was placed under the direction of William C. Beer, national committee representative. Immediately after the G.A.R. encampment the speakers bureau had signed up Generals Sickles and Alger; to these were added Generals O. O. Howard, T. J. Stewart, O. A. Marden, and the ubiquitous James Tanner. Others joined for various portions of the tour; Captain John R. Tanner, Republican candidate for governor of Illinois, accompanied the party

[19] Chicago *Tribune*, September 6, 10, October 23, 1896.
[20] *Ibid.*, September 8, October 5, 23, 28, 1896.

through his state. Alger wired Harrison requesting his company through Indiana, but the former President was not interested. Two newspaper men accompanied the generals.[21]

The train of the "Patriotic Heroes Battalion" was indeed a startling sight. The engine was bedecked with bunting, flags, and mottoes, as was also the "famously stocked" Pullman dining car. Then followed General Alger's two private cars, and after those, two sleeping coaches. All were covered with portraits and such inscriptions as "1896 as Vitally Important as 1861" and "For the Honor of our Country." Back of the observation car was a flatcar fitted with a portable platform, two thirty-foot collapsible flagpoles, and a cannon. The last was under charge of experienced gunners. "It is not doubted," commented the Chicago *Tribune*, "that this special train with its soldier orators, its two thousand yards of bunting, its flags and cannon, will make something of a stir along the journey." [22]

From the beginning the old generals drew enormous crowds. First point on the itinerary was Chicago, where a monster rally was held in the auditorium under the management of the local Veteran Union League. The hall was packed; hundreds stood in the aisles to see the legless "corporal," the one-legged Sickles, and the one-armed Howard perform. The party toured Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. In the large cities the generals held forth in great halls; in the less important ones they packed thousands into tents.

But for small towns the procedure was different. Messengers hurried a day ahead of the train to announce its arrival. A throng of people, largely composed of veterans and accompanied by a band, greeted the generals as they pulled into the station. The orators mounted the platform car, and after patriotic tunes by the band and much booming of cannon, General Sickles exhorted his comrades to follow the path of patriotism into the Republican party. The seventy-year-old war horse was the star of every occasion. Seated in a large chair and holding his crutches in one

[21] Charles S. Olcott, *The Life of William McKinley* (Boston and New York, 1916), 2 vols., I, 323; Alger to Harrison, October 1, 1896, Harrison MSS.; Chicago *Tribune*, October 7, 1896.

[22] Chicago *Tribune*, October 7, 1896.

hand, he addressed his audience "as a commander did his troops." [23] Invariably his talk was of patriotism, home, country, and the flag.

Alger and Captain Tanner followed with the party's sound-money arguments, and the "corporal" usually closed the proceedings with a rousing patriotic address. As the train moved slowly out of the station to the roar of the cannon and the cheers of the crowd, the bugler sounded taps. The grizzled veterans worked hard; they averaged seven stops daily in their task of reviving forgotten memories of the Union cause and its protector, the Republican party. And for many a small town the visit of the "Patriotic Heroes" was "the great political event of the year." [24]

The veterans' tour produced consternation among Democrats, and "Coin" Harvey irritatedly termed the generals "old wrecks of the rebellion who have lost all their honor and patriotism, the tools of political Shylocks." Republicans made the most of this hasty remark; the old heroes themselves included scathing rebukes in their "impromptu" speeches. Republicans were convinced that the tour brought back to the fold "many a wayward comrade." [25]

Possibly it was the success of this simple flag-waving project that led Chairman Hanna to issue his Flag Day order. For several years the Grand Army had been sponsoring the observance of a flag day as part of its campaign for intensified patriotism. By 1896 the organization had achieved general celebration of the date, and Hanna decided to have a "flag day" of his own to connect the cause of patriotism with that of "honest money." Telegraphed instructions went out to all county chairmen requesting them to arrange for patriotic exercises and a flag display on October 31. The day was to be made a general holiday as far as possible. The idea, said the Chicago *Tribune*, was that people should "unfurl Old Glory . . . and testify thereby . . . their opposition to the Popocratic policy which tends to discredit it." Accordingly the Stars and Stripes were floated to the breeze to make a country-

[23] *Ibid.*, October 10, 1896.

[24] *Ibid.*, September 5, 21, 22, October 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 21, 1896; *Harper's Weekly*, XL (October 31, 1896), 1084; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 15, 1896; Beer, *Hanna*, 161; *id.*, *The Mauve Decade: American Life at the End of the Nineteenth Century* (New York, 1926), 87.

[25] *Harper's Weekly*, XL (October 31, 1896), 1084; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 15, November 12, 1896; New York *Tribune*, October 8, 1896; Chicago *Tribune*, October 7, 1896.

wide Republican rally. In Canton, Ohio, where Foraker assisted McKinley in addressing the crowds, the greatest multitude of the campaign assembled around the candidate's home.

The Democratic committee requested its followers to observe the day also on the ground that Republicans had no right to pre-empt the flag or monopolize patriotism. The Chicago *Tribune* scornfully asserted that the only Democrats who had any logical right to celebrate a flag day were those in the sound-money faction: "They do not believe the States Rights doctrine of Altgeld and Debs. . . ." Two days later, in a final appeal to old soldiers, this paper nicely tied up the Flag Day observance with the veterans' campaign for a flag display.[26]

As usual, the Grand Army commander in chief reminded members not to wear their uniforms to political demonstrations, and state commanders sent out similar warnings.[27] But official denunciation of Cleveland's pension administration had already indicated the political position of many posts and leaders. National officers and other prominent members, especially in the East, worked more or less quietly for the Republicans.

In the West, however, the disposition of many members to follow Bryan created considerable dissension. The Nebraska commander reported: ". . . posts have been bereft of a working majority, and members have been alienated from the post room. . . ." The Oregon commander complained that the campaign had caused disputes in his department, while the Kansas commander declared that "industrial and commercial demoralization" had produced "uncharitable political discussions which divided our members into factions and arrayed one against the other in bitter unyielding and fraternal contention." [28]

The Providence *Journal* publicized a rumor originating in Washington, D.C., that the Grand Army encampment would take a "decided stand" on the silver question; soon the report was "the talk of the hour" at "all the political headquarters." Immedi-

[26] Chicago *Tribune*, October 25, 27, November 1, 3, 1896; Minneapolis *Tribune*, November 1, 1896; New York *Tribune*, October 27, 31, November 1, 1896.

[27] New York *Tribune*, June 2, 1896; *Proceedings 31st Encampment Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 51; *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 9," Indianapolis, May 15, 1896, p. 291.

[28] *Journal 21st Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 83; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, 24; *Journal 17th Encampment Kansas G.A.R.*, 10.

ately the Washington *Post* expressed the hope that the forecast would prove erroneous. The paper pointed out that while some posts unanimously favored free coinage of silver and others were equally unanimous in opposing it, the great majority were divided on the question: "If the encampment takes up the currency question it will find itself in the midst of an exciting political debate which will produce discord without producing any compensatory good." [29] Eastern officers may actually have contemplated pushing a "sound currency" resolution through the encampment; if so, they abandoned the idea. Workers at the St. Paul assembly concentrated upon developing enthusiasm for McKinley and the gold standard outside the official meetings.

These zealots were so successful that the encampment was almost as much a Republican rally as the one of 1888 had been. A representative of the Republican national committee was on hand early; he was a G.A.R. member, but he attended as a "private citizen" in order that he might be free "to talk sound money all the time." While he was distributing "hard money" literature among the veterans with a "liberal hand," his wife was performing similar missionary work among the W.R.C. delegates.

The great majority of those who attended the encampment were Republicans, and they were more open than usual in proclaiming their political views. McKinley buttons were as much in evidence as Grand Army badges. So many marchers in the parade shouted themselves hoarse for McKinley that spectators might have mistaken the moving column for a campaign demonstration. The North Dakota delegates, five hundred strong, waved sheaves of wheat as they chanted, "Hard wheat, hard money, and McKinley."

Even during the proceedings this enthusiasm burst forth; the appearance of General Sickles at the opening exercises produced a resounding ovation. Because of the general's prominence as a campaigner, this demonstration was regarded "as a reiteration of the stand taken openly by the veterans in their parade." When the encampment elected as commander Nebraska's ardently Republican Thaddeus Stevens Clarkson, he remarked to reporters that his only regret was the necessity of canceling his campaign

[29] Washington *Post*, August 28, 1896; Minneapolis *Tribune*, August 29, 1896.

speeches. But he was consoled by the fact that the outgoing commander, General Walker, would replace him on the stump.[30]

Grand Army leaders boasted that no previous encampment had ever expressed such enthusiasm for a political candidate.[31] In view of the division among western members over campaign issues, it was surprising that the encampment could be so nearly unanimous in its expressions. It is possible that the free-silver advocates abandoned attendance at meetings and thus had no share in the selection of delegates. In any case, Republicans pointed to the encampment as proof that the nation's defenders were still upholding the "national honor."

The "tour of the generals," too, heightened the impression that the organization was enthusiastically supporting the "sound money" cause. The participants were G.A.R. leaders, and former Commander in Chief Walker accompanied them on part of the trip. Former Commander Lawler presided over the demonstration at Rockford, Illinois; in some cases posts participated officially in the exercises. Warnings against open partisanship must have been faint in the organization's councils; after the election Commander in Chief Clarkson issued an order congratulating members on their comrade's victory. "Let us stand by him," he added, "with the same spirit of loyalty and patriotism that inspired us from 1861 to 1865." [32]

The Republican victory has been generally attributed to the "masterly" work of Chairman Hanna.[33] Not the least important of the committee's extensive efforts were its elaborate projects to attract the soldiers: the carefully managed generals' tour, Dudley's veterans' organization, the ballyhoo at the G.A.R. encampment, and the clever newspaper propaganda regarding the effect of free silver on pensions. The last, powerful in its pocketbook appeal, was undoubtedly intended as a substitute for the highly successful pension promises of the 1888 campaign.

[30] *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 190; Chicago *Tribune*, September 1, 4, 5, 1896; Minneapolis *Tribune*, September 1, 3, 4, 8, 1896.

[31] Chicago *Tribune*, September 1, 4, 19, 1896.

[32] Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 15, 1896; Chicago *Tribune*, October 7, 10, 11, 13, 1896; *Journal 31st National Encampment G.A.R.*, T. S. Clarkson, "General Orders No. 3," Omaha, Neb., 334; *Proceedings Union Veteran Legion National Encampment*, 1896, pp. 54, 55.

[33] Olcott, *Life of McKinley*, I, 323; Dunn, *From Harrison to Harding*, I, 199.

Just how effective these projects were it would be impossible to determine. Certainly any pensioner likely to be influenced by the mercenary aspect of Republican arguments would find little satisfaction in Bryan's emphatic but vague rejoinders. Hanna's "free silver cuts pensions" ballyhoo was only one phase of his determined effort to cover fundamental questions with a furiously concentrated attack on the currency issue. Bryan and his cohorts fell into Hanna's trap by meeting Republicans on their own ground and confining their campaigning to a defense of their views on money. In consenting to the narrow issue Bryan held his western agrarian followers but won little support from the lower economic ranks in the growing cities and their outlying rural districts.[34]

Apparently the veterans were no exception to this generalization. Old soldier–farmers west of the Mississippi decided that their mortgages were more important than their pensions and followed Bryan's standard. Kansas and Nebraska, high in soldier population, voted against Comrade McKinley. But the campaign's real decision lay in other regions, and there many old soldiers were influenced by Republican propaganda. From California came the report, "This state would undoubtedly have gone to Bryan, but for the remarkable work done by the 'Army and Navy Republican League,' for we found at the very outset of the campaign, that vast hosts of the old veterans had espoused the Populist cause. By adopting some of our old Indiana tactics, viz:—thorough organization of the soldier element throughout the State, into Clubs, we have achieved great results, and I claim we won the day." [35]

Moreover, although Republicans neglected Cleveland's Pension Bureau policy in their concentration on free silver, the earlier propaganda had a lasting effect. The Grand Army pension committee remarked: ". . . beyond doubt the political campaign of 1896 was largely influenced by the hope of ameliorating the harsh conditions then obtaining in the Pension Bureau." [36]

[34] Barnes, "Myths of the Bryan Campaign," *loc. cit.*, 402–404.

[35] Minneapolis *Tribune*, November 10, 1896; Heck, *Civil War Veteran in Minnesota Life and Politics*, 149; Beer, *Hanna*, 113–16; Barnes, "Myths of the Bryan Campaign," *loc. cit.*, 382; Jay Cummings to Harrison, November 15, 1896, Harrison MSS.; *Proceedings 30th Encampment Ohio G.A.R.*, 1896, p. 79.

[36] *Proceedings 21st Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 1897, p. 79; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1898, p. 269.

The soldier press, at least, entertained no doubts regarding the veterans' contribution to the result. The *National Tribune* declared, "Never since the war were the veterans so thoroughly united . . . on one side of a political question." The *American Tribune*, estimating that 90 per cent of the servicemen had supported the Republicans, suggested that a pension bill would be a fair reward. Some politicians, too, believed that the soldiers' vote had been decisive. They announced that a cabinet post for General Alger, because of his popularity with the boys and his position as past Grand Army commander, would be a fitting gesture of gratitude.[37]

Veterans expressed enthusiasm over Alger's appointment as secretary of war, but they were by no means content with gestures. Many hoped for offices; national G.A.R. headquarters were overwhelmed with requests for recommendations. Finally Commander Clarkson issued a statement that such endorsements would violate the nonpartisanship regulation. The *American Tribune*, championing the soldiers' demands for offices, commented that the subject was "growing to the dimensions of an important question." [38]

Soon after McKinley's inauguration, the Grand Army's Department of the Potomac sent a delegation to inform him of Cleveland's dismissals and to request more generous treatment. The delegation complained that civil-service rules had been extended to cover such minor positions as watchmen and messengers. Many crippled veterans who could not pass a civil-service examination were yet able to fulfill the duties of these minor offices. The President listened courteously and promised action.[39]

McKinley met the veterans' highest expectations. He informed the departments that he wished veterans to be prominent figures in his administration and requested the reinstatement of those who had been dismissed. Immediately the work of appointment and

[37] Washington *National Tribune*, November 12, 1896; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, November 12, 1896; William E. Chandler to McKinley, January 12, 1897, William McKinley MSS. (1847–1902), Library of Congress.

[38] *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, T. S. Clarkson, "General Orders No. 4," Omaha, Neb., 343; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, January 7, February 4, 1897.

[39] New York *Tribune*, March 27, 1897; *Journal 30th Encampment Potomac G.A.R.*, 10–11.

reinstatement began. Potomac Department's commander rejoiced, "It has been a reign of terror to the old soldier for the past four years. . . . The comrades have been sustained by an unswerving faith that the succeeding administration would be friendly to their interests. Their faith was well founded. Their words cannot express their joy over the welcome change." [40]

Although veterans were grateful for their favored position, they wanted it established by law, which still granted preference only to the disabled. A general preference measure would be a powerful weapon in the old soldiers' struggle against the Civil Service Commission and insurance against such orders as that of the commission in 1889 providing that no veteran was eligible for special consideration unless he had been discharged from the army for disability contracted during service. Early in 1897 the Washington *National Tribune* called attention to the Grand Army legislative committee's agitation for preference legislation and joined the G.A.R. and the Union Veteran Legion in a determined warfare against the civil-service-reform movement. The commander of the Department of California and Nevada urged his encampment to ask Congress for "redress of the wrongs perpetrated upon the Union veteran under the guise of reformation in the civil service," and the assembly followed his suggestion. In 1898 the Union Veteran Legion officially requested Congress to repeal the civil-service law. "Corporal" Tanner, defending this resolution, cried, "I tell you that these holier than thou fellows are the smallest men in the country. It is high time we spoke out." The *American Tribune* was equally emphatic: "Down with the civil service fraud and up with the people! Sound principles, first; college diplomas, second!" [41]

Under the leadership of the indomitable Joseph W. Kay, the Grand Army's legislative committee battled valiantly for preference legislation. It tried to steer several bills through Congress; in 1898 Kay blamed his failure on the "treasonable" hostility of

[40] *Journal 30th Encampment Potomac G.A.R.*, 10–11; *Proceedings 26th Encampment Virginia and North Carolina G.A.R.*, address of Thomas S. Hopkins, 34.

[41] New York *Tribune*, August 27, 1889; Washington *National Tribune*, February 4, 1897; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1897, p. 10; *Proceedings 12th National Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 61; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, August 19, November 18, 1897.

Speaker Thomas B. Reed, a G.A.R. member. Meanwhile the administration did all it could to appease the soldiers by showering them with appointments. N. P. Chipman, now Grand Army commander of the Department of California and Nevada, admitted that McKinley's officers had been extremely generous. In July, 1899, the President issued an executive order protecting old soldiers holding civil-service positions which he had recently exempted from classification. A few months later he issued to the Civil Service Commission his "Rule XI," providing that veterans who had left the civil service and accepted minor positions might be reinstated at the highest compensation which they had previously received.[42]

But Kay's committee and the Union Veteran Legion were still determined to win legislation, and they grew increasingly resentful of the opposition they encountered from the civil service commissioners and the Civil Service Reform League. Late in 1899 the Union Veteran Legion resolved that the soldier's discharge certificate "should be at least equally potent in securing employment under the Government he assisted in saving . . . as any college diploma or professional 'sheepskin' presented by . . . enemies or lukewarm friends of the Union in the day of its direst need." In 1900 a western Grand Army commander termed the civil-service-reform movement "a plant of foreign origin, imported into this country by pedants, and . . . a nuisance to the public service. . . ." It was antagonistic to soldiers' interests and should receive their "united protest" upon every occasion. The U.V.U. became anxious about competition from Spanish-American War veterans; in 1900 it demanded legislation granting Union soldiers preference not only over civilians, but over "all other ex-United States soldiers." [43]

The Grand Army's lobbying committee received strong support when Commander in Chief Louis Rassieur issued a circular

[42] Woods, "The G.A.R. and Civil Service," 96–106, 109–13; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1898, p. 8; Washington *National Tribune*, September 13, 1900; *Journal 33rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 70–71; Chicago *Tribune*, September 11, 1896.

[43] Resolutions, September, 1899, *Proceedings 14th National Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 72; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1900, pp. 10, 50; resolutions, October, 1900, *Proceedings National Encampments Union Veterans' Union* (1885–1903), *15th Encampment*, 56.

requesting posts to send demands for preference legislation to their congressmen, and enclosed a sample resolution. But congressional indifference as well as opposition from civil-service reformers proved too much for Kay and his lobbyists to overcome. The committee not only reported sadly to the encampment of 1901 that its bill had failed but condemned Comrades William Hepburn and Charles Grosvenor for failing to aid from the floors of Congress.[44]

Actually, circumstances never favored the veteran preference campaign as they did the pension movement. The *National Tribune* supported the cause, but its championship was understandably secondary to its interest in pension measures. Claim agents lacked any personal motive for contributing their powerful support. Nor did veterans themselves have the same enthusiasm for the preference issue as for the pension movement, although they believed that a preference law should be on the books as recognition of their "right." Moreover, the preference movement never met such a favorable combination of circumstances as did the pension agitators in 1888 when their cause dovetailed perfectly with the Republican tariff program. Finally, although the opposition to pension bills was at least as strong as that to preference legislation, proponents of the latter had no powerful weapon like the "tools of the Southern Brigadiers" argument of the pension zealots. The Grand Army's complaints against civil-service reformers must, in fact, have sounded somewhat specious in the ears of the public.[45]

Although the veterans' press, the Union Veterans' Union, and the Union Veteran Legion insistently demanded service pensions, the issue was not vital during this period. The majority of veterans seemed too well satisfied with the 1890 act to heed the efforts of the service pension leaders to arouse them. In some sections the Grand Army supported the movement, but the organization as a whole was indifferent. The remark of the Tennessee commander may have expressed a general conviction: ". . . the policy of unreasonable exaction will surely react for

[44] "Circular No. 1," St. Louis, September 13, 1900, in Washington *National Tribune*, October 4, 1900; *Journal 35th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 150, 283–92, 294; Woods, "G.A.R. and Civil Service," 114–28.

[45] For a somewhat different emphasis, see Woods, "G.A.R. and Civil Service," 2, 130.

it does not take a large reaction in the North joined to the fixed prejudice in the South to undo much of the pension legislation now on the statute books. Conservatism is demanded by the interests of the soldier himself." At the national encampment of 1898 the Grand Army's pension committee reported that it considered agitation for new legislation inexpedient and was therefore concentrating upon pressure for more liberal administration of existing laws.[46]

And this was the subject that touched a responsive chord for pensioners; throughout McKinley's administration they kept careful watch on the Pension Bureau's policy. The President announced in his inaugural address that federal revenues should be sufficiently large, not only to meet the government's current needs, but "to make proper and liberal provision for that most deserving body of public creditors, the soldiers and sailors and widows and orphans who are pensioners of the United States." Veterans regarded this statement as a pledge that the unpopular Democratic pension policy would be reversed. Because the new commissioner, H. Clay Evans of Tennessee, discontinued Lochren's suspensions and revisions of ratings, soldiers accepted his policy for a time with silent approval. But what they really wanted was a return to the liberal practice of the Tanner and Raum regimes, which was in effect an extension of the 1890 law. When it became clear that Evans was unwilling to go so far, the veterans' press and the Grand Army began to condemn his administration. Evens did much to reform abuses and expose frauds; pension agents had no love for him.[47]

By the middle of 1897 the spirit of discontent had become so general that the Grand Army encampment passed resolutions on the matter. During 1898 many posts and departments denounced

[46] Boston *Grand Army Record*, December, 1895, December, 1896; Washington *National Tribune*, 1896–97; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, October 21, 1897; *Proceedings 12th Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 89; *Proceedings 13th National Encampment Union Veterans' Union*, 9, 55; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1897, p. 8; *Proceedings 12th Encampment Tennessee G.A.R.*, 55; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Minnesota G.A.R.*, 1896, p. 71; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 201; *Proceedings 14th National Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 38.

[47] Boston *Grand Army Record*, April, 1897; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 241.

Evans officially, while the commander in chief wired the lobbying committee to meet in Washington for an investigation of pension administration. Submitting the committee's report to the 1899 encampment, he pointed out that although $140,000,000 had been appropriated for pensions during the fiscal year, the Pension Bureau had expended a mere $138,253,922.91. The Grand Army, the Union Veteran Union and the veterans' press increased their pressure, and in the presidential year of 1900 Congress authorized some of Raum's liberal practices.[48]

Evans, however, placed a narrower interpretation on this law than claim agents and the Grand Army expected. The national encampment of 1900 therefore requested the President to redress its grievances and urged that the commissioner's power to interpret laws be transferred to a court of pension appeals. This time McKinley resisted Grand Army demands and obstinately retained his efficient commissioner. But by 1902 pressure was so great that Theodore Roosevelt eagerly accepted Evans' resignation.[49]

Meanwhile the Grand Army's campaign for the inculcation of patriotism gathered momentum. If the organization's leaders, with an eye to pensions, had begun the campaign in order to emphasize their position as the nation's saviors, they soon became enamored of the cause and stressed it for its own sake. Early in 1890 the commander in chief instructed posts to "interest themselves in their home schools, encourage the use of the flag on school buildings, urge a systematic method of teaching patriotism in schools, and take such further steps as are best adapted to the particular locality by designating one day in each year for this purpose." Department officers and the veterans' press exhorted members to adopt these projects, and posts did so with enthusiasm. Wisconsin posts, for example, sponsored a series of free lectures in the schools on Civil War subjects. Others sponsored essay contests; through-

[48] *Journal 33rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 67–69; Washington *National Tribune*, January 20, 27, February 3, June 2, September 8, November 24, 1888, January 12, February 6, April 27–December 31, 1899, January–December, 1900; *Proceedings 14th National Encampment Union Veterans' Union*, 123; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 242.

[49] Washington *National Tribune*, September 6, 1900; Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions*, 244; Peck, *Twenty Years of the Republic*, 674.

out the country delegations of uniformed boys in blue attended school exercises to award prizes or lead ceremonies.[50]

Posts continued to present flags to neighborhood schools, while departments pressed state legislatures to make their display mandatory. When a G.A.R. committee first mounted a school platform to present its flag to an attentive young audience, the flying of the Stars and Stripes over educational institutions was virtually unknown. By 1895 the commander in chief was able to boast that they floated over 17,988 of the 26,588 public schools within the twenty-one Grand Army departments. The movement received powerful impetus early in 1899, when former President Harrison endorsed it in his address at the centennial anniversary of Washington's inauguration. Posts and departments continued to sponsor flag day, and under instructions from the national encampment they urged the celebration of Washington's birthday with patriotic exercises in schools and elsewhere.[51]

Under Grand Army encouragement, too, public schools became increasingly interested in Memorial Day ceremonies and welcomed offers from Grand Army committees to take charge of exercises. Officers continued to express indignation as with each successive year amusement spots drew increasingly larger crowds than did cemeteries. By 1891 every northern state had made the day a legal holiday; and people swarmed to beaches, picnic grounds, and race tracks. One newspaper urged the Grand Army not to "expect average people to keep themselves attuned to the tragic side of the nation's anniversaries." But with dogged persistence members reminded the public that the day should be more than an opportunity for play.[52]

[50] *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 356; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 304; Boston *Grand Army Record*, March, 1893, September, 1894; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, March 30, September 21, 1893; Worcester *Veteran*, July, 1893.

[51] *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 81; *29th National Encampment*, 304, 310; *Proceedings 28th Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 103; *30th Encampment*, 116–17; *Journal 21st Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, address of Commander in Chief Lawler, 45; Stoddard, *As I Knew Them*, 180; *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 256; *Proceedings 29th Encampment Rhode Island G.A.R.*, 97.

[52] Minneapolis *Tribune*, May 30, 1896; New York *Tribune*, May 30, 1894, May 30, 1896; "General Orders No. 11," April 25, 1893, Department of Washington and Alaska G.A.R., Logan MSS.; Boston *Grand Army Record*, May, 1893, April, 1894, April, 1897; Washington *National Tribune*, May 25, 1893,

One phase of the patriotic crusade was the Grand Army's increasing interest in "The Star Spangled Banner." But members hesitated to follow their commander's instruction to rise at its opening bars; they were self-conscious about standing at attention while the remainder of the audience remained seated. The encampment of 1894 tabled a resolution making it obligatory for members to rise. Gradually the idea developed that everyone should stand. In 1895 the *American Tribune* joined the movement with the complaint that audiences usually sat in silence while the anthem was being played. It encouraged G.A.R. men with the comment, "A little persistency for a year or two will establish a rule whose observance will become universal and enduring." [53]

In the late 1890's the Grand Army's efforts to inculcate national loyalty among both school children and the adult population became a veritable crusade. Department officers inspired members to increased activity; at every national encampment committees reported on achievements and made suggestions for future work. In every annual parade the marching delegates carried banners inscribed "Teach Patriotism!" This "compulsory patriotism" received some unfavorable press comment; and a blast of opposition came from Harvard's President Charles W. Eliot, who categorically condemned the movement. The G.A.R.'s reaction was expressed by the scornful remark of a veterans' newspaper that "a servile copy" of English institutions like Harvard would naturally frown upon a thoroughly American organization that did not "sneeze every time England takes snuff." [54]

Censure, in fact, only spurred the Grand Army to intensified work. And beneath the desire to develop American patriotism

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May 23, 1895, May 21, 1896, June 2, 1898, May 17, 1900; *A Sermon Delivered by Rev. John W. Sayers . . . , July 16, 1893 . . .* (pamphlet, n.p., 1893), Library of Congress, 13; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, May 31, 1894, May 30, 1895, June 3, 1897; *Proceedings 27th Encampment New York G.A.R.*, "General Orders No. 3," May 9, 1892, p. 19; *31st Encampment*, 469; see also, Chapter IX, n. 24, 25.

[53] *Proceedings 12th Encampment Washington and Alaska G.A.R.*, 34; *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 246; *Proceedings 27th Encampment Rhode Island G.A.R.*, 50; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, July 18, 1895.

[54] Fall River (Mass.) *Globe*, quoted in Washington *National Tribune*, September 26, 1895; *ibid.*, May 28, 1896; Boston *Grand Army Record*, May, 1896; *Proceedings 30th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 181; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, May 28, 1896; New York *Tribune*, June 4, 1896; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 223; *32nd National Encampment*, 193.

realistic motives undoubtedly still lurked. The New Hampshire commander remarked to his encampment, "Selfish consideration might well spur us on. The opportunity and power of the Grand Army . . . were greatly enlarged by the Department when it instituted the Bureau of Patriotic Instruction. Expiring posts may now revive energy and prestige, and it seems incredible that any Post should neglect to occupy this vantage ground." In 1896 the Kansas Department's education committee reported that it had conferred with the state's leading educators "with a view . . . of formulating plans for awakening a deeper interest and a more quick sentiment among them regarding the men who fought the battles for the Union, the great sacrifices they made and the hardships they endured." [55]

The Woman's Relief Corps entered zealously into the work. Early in 1893 the Indiana branch formally joined the loyalty movement, and a few months later the national encampment advocated "the adoption of some form of patriotic instruction in our public schools." It instructed departmental officers to see that their corps presidents appointed committees of "influential ladies" who would urge school superintendents and teachers to institute a flag salute for school children. The following year the committee on patriotic teaching recommended that the organization encourage patriotic contests among school children. The encampment officially endorsed the G. T. Balch flag salute but recognized also that of Frank Bellamy of the *Youth's Companion*. The society urged the use of Balch's *Patriotic Primer* in the schools. Thus inspired, delegations of enthusiastic women swooped down upon school officials, teachers, and state teachers' associations to argue for flag salutes and patriotic exercises.[56]

The W.R.C. was equally fervent in aiding the movement for school flags. The committee on patriotic teaching announced to the encampment of 1895 that the Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois,

[55] *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of New Hampshire G.A.R.* (1881–1944), 1896, p. 88; *Journal 15th Encampment Kansas G.A.R.*, 56.

[56] Washington *National Tribune*, November 9, 1893; *Proceedings National Convention, Woman's Relief Corps* (1885–), *11th Convention*, 285; *12th Convention*, 239–44, 327–34; *13th Convention*, 293; George Thacher Balch, *A Patriotic Primer for the Little Citizen*, revised and enlarged by Wallace Foster (Indianapolis, 1895); Charles R. Skinner, *Manual of Patriotism for Use in the Public Schools of the State of New York* (New York, 1900).

Connecticut, Montana, Iowa, and South Dakota legislatures had already responded to pressure and provided that all public schools should raise flags. The committee expressed gratitude to the American Flag Manufacturing Company of Easton, Pennsylvania, which had not only provided generous help but had given the organization over five thousand patriotic rituals for distribution to schools. The W.R.C. was discouraged only by the complete indifference of southerners to its efforts. The Union Veterans' Union joined the crusade, and in 1896 it designated the Friday preceding Memorial Day as "Union Veteran Soldiers' Day." On this annual occasion members conducted patriotic exercises for children.[57]

In 1899 the Grand Army encampment adopted a flag salute; and Allan C. Bakewell, "Chief Aide in Charge of Military Instruction and Patriotic Education in the Public Schools," circulated it throughout the country. He reported that schools, teachers, and boards of instruction had "universally welcomed and largely adopted" it. "Millions of children now pay daily tribute to our beautiful Flag and give it reverence and respect." In the ceremony recommended by the G.A.R., the students rose as a leader brought the flag forward. With right hand uplifted in salute they repeated, "I pledge allegiance to my flag and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." Then the hand was extended, palm upward, and the pupils sang "America." In primary classes the tots repeated, more or less in unison, "I give my hand, my head, my heart to my country. One country, one people, one flag." [58]

All these activities soon produced results. In 1896 the W.R.C. committee on patriotic teaching announced, "The growth in patriotic sentiment is unmistakable." Bakewell reported in 1901 that about two thousand schools hoisted the flag during school hours, while five thousand schoolrooms displayed flags: "In most of these the salute is given. About four hundred thousand children are thus instructed in patriotism." The Indiana commander proudly told his encampment, "The very atmosphere all over

[57] *Proceedings 13th Convention W.R.C.*, 293–95; Chicago *Tribune*, September 13, 1894; *Proceedings 10th National Encampment Union Veterans' Union*, 62, 63.

[58] *Journal 34th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 157; *33rd National Encampment*, 350; *Proceedings 25th Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 95.

this country that is breathed . . . by the school children and youths of our land is saturated, permeated and impregnated with the patriotism, love of country and flag that is wafted on the breezes from out the G.A.R. Post rooms." Patriotism, indeed, was becoming a fundamental concept in the American educational system. And one by-product was the sentimental attachment with which adults as well as children looked upon the old veteran who, in his blue coat with the Grand Army badge, was the central figure at all the exercises.[59]

Another phase of the campaign was the G.A.R.'s successful movement to make military instruction a part of the public-school curriculum. As in the case of the flag presentations, New York City's vigilant Lafayette Post was the first to adopt the cause of general military instruction. In August, 1893, it announced that the Grand Army "should unite in an organized effort" to impress upon the various states the advisability of adopting some system of training. These resolutions contained a quotation from former President Harrison's address to the National Association of Teachers that the nation's strength, contrasted with "the armies of the other great powers," lay "in the great reserve to be found in the instructed young of our land, who come to its defense in time of peril." The committee chairman sent these resolutions to Harrison, who expressed his willingness to discuss the matter personally and promised to exert his influence for the movement. The indefatigable chairman also put his case before the War Department and sent circular letters to all school superintendents in towns of over ten thousand inhabitants.[60]

Lafayette Post transmitted its resolutions to the Commander in Chief with the comment, "Without being aggressive we must be prepared to defend our country's interests, whether attacked at home or abroad." The national encampment adopted them, and in 1894 it expressed the opinion that military instruction should become a part of the school system. The editor of *Century Magazine*,

[59] *Proceedings 14th Convention W.R.C.*, 185; *Journal 35th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 249; *Proceedings 20th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 189.

[60] Harrison to Capt. E. L. Zalinsky, August 17, 1893, Tibbott Transcripts, Harrison MSS.; copies of resolutions, Lafayette Post 140 G.A.R., on military instruction, and also resolutions of Lafayette Post submitted to and accepted by the national encampment, *ibid.*; New York *Tribune*, February 4, 9, 19, 1894.

a member of Lafayette Post, urged Harrison to support the movement with an open letter. Harrison complied, and his article appeared in the January, 1894, issue. The movement's leaders found it of great service; apparently the article awakened general interest. Immediately after its appearance, the New York *Tribune* adopted the cause and publicized the Lafayette Post's arguments. Not only would drilling develop the physique of the young; it would sharpen intellectual faculties and aid in character building. Boston public schools, the paper pointed out, had been experimenting with military training for several years and regarded the results as highly successful. The *Tribune* gave full reports of the movement's progress. The problem, it believed, was "how to become a people of military knowledge, prepared for emergencies, without being a nation in arms. The most obvious solution of the question is to begin with the children and give them at a receptive age such military drills as will enable them to become if need be, good soldiers in later life." [61]

From the beginning the New York Department was particularly interested in the question, and members frequently attended practice drills. Late in 1894 the department held an exhibition drill of boys from New York City schools. In January, 1895, Lafayette Post sponsored a conference of governors and staffs from several states to discuss uniform action in the matter. The post also hoped that the gathering would be good publicity for the movement, and particularly wished to spotlight the occasion with Harrison's presence. When the former President found that a law case would prevent his appearance at Carnegie Hall, the post commander wrung his hands through five long pages of entreaty: ". . . just a word or two from your eloquent lips" would "quicken and enliven the patriotism of this great country such

[61] *Proceedings 27th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 247; *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 245; Zalinsky and committee to Commander A. G. Mills, with enclosed resolutions, October 12, 1893, Harrison MSS.; Benjamin Harrison, "Military Instruction in Schools and Colleges, an Open Letter," in *Century Magazine*, XLVII, N.S. XXV (1894), 468–69; R. W. Rieder (?) to Harrison, December 11, 1894, Harrison MSS.; Charles H. T. Collis to *id.*, December 11, 1894, *ibid.*; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 230–31; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, May 9, 1895; T. B. Bronson, "The Value of Military Training and Discipline in the Schools," in *School Review* (Ithaca, 1893–), II (1894), 281–85; New York *Tribune*, February 19, July 4, 15, December 11, 1894; February 2, 4, March 11, 18, 31, April 3, June 13, 18, 1895.

as no other one man is able to do." Many governors were enthusiastic and wanted details for legislative recommendations. The whole movement, in fact, would crystallize in the conference; immediately afterward seven thousand post committees would begin lobbying work on the state legislatures. "What can we say, what can we do to persuade you?"

Although Harrison stayed with his case, the assembly was a great success. Lafayette Post courted wide publicity by entertaining at lunch the staffs of all New York City's leading newspapers. The conference closed with a drill of uniformed school boys. The city's Memorial Day parade a few months later indicated that the post's idea had taken firm root; thirteen thousand lads marched "with true military swing and precision." Lafayette Post retained its prominence as the movement became general; E. L. Zalinski, who first suggested the idea, served as a Grand Army national "aide," as did also the post's commander.[62]

National headquarters soon adopted the cause in earnest. The commander in chief appointed a national "Aide in Charge of Military Instruction in the Public Schools," who propagandized the public. This work was none too easy; immediate objections came from the Friends and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

Numerous writers, including Felix Adler, W. D. Howells and Henry George, strongly protested against a bill in the New York legislature providing for military instruction. They urged that everyone holding similar views express them to his representatives. "The attempt to encourage in America the growth of the spirit of militarism which has done so much to hamper the civilization and prosperity of Europe" they considered "a menace to true freedom." The argument of "beneficial physical effects," these writers believed, was nullified by the fact that calisthenics could achieve better results. Alfred Love's Universal Peace Union and other antimilitarists did all that they could to combat the campaign; they argued that it was "harmful, unchristian and unneces-

[62] Collis to Harrison, December 11, 1894, Harrison MSS.; Henry H. Adams to *id.*, January 14, 1894, *ibid.*; *id.* to *id.*, January 19, 1894, *ibid.*; New York *Tribune*, January 18, 26, 1894; *Proceedings 29th Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 107–108; *30th Encampment*, 117; *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 159; statement of Adams, April 13, 1896, Cleveland MSS.

sary," as well as an incongruity in the public-school system. Love tried to head off the whole movement by suggesting that fire, instead of military, drills be encouraged. But the peace workers were struggling against the spirit of the times; the Grand Army was riding on the full tide of nationalism that would soon burst forth into the Spanish-American War.[63]

Some of the labor unions officially condemned the Grand Army project because they believed that it might "tend to create an army" which would "threaten the liberties of the masses." As a matter of fact, Grand Army leaders did regard their project as a bulwark against possible unrest on the part of the "masses." Some warned of the "increasing unrest between capital and labor" in urging their plan "as a solvent in the enforcement of law and order." One commander declared: ". . . the success of this new experiment is especially gratifying at this period, when disorganizing doctrines are disseminated so insidiously. . . . A force conservative of the safeguards of the social organization is thus built up among the youth, from whom these enemies might otherwise draw a swarm of dangerous recruits." [64]

The national aide, undaunted by opposition, distributed twenty-five hundred pamphlets urging military instruction and quoting favorable opinions of prominent men. Moreover, he kept the department aides supplied with propaganda for distribution among posts and educational authorities. In some cities posts appointed members to give instruction in the schools.

Peace-movement leaders succeeded in blocking the G.A.R.'s efforts in Philadelphia and Providence, but in many other large cities of the eastern and middle states the military training enthusiasts were successful. It was easiest, of course, to introduce the system in areas supporting large schools. Greatest progress was made in New York State, where by 1895 twenty thousand

[63] New York *Tribune,* January 26, March 18, 1895; Felix Adler, Ernest Howard Crosby, W. D. Howells, Josephine Shaw Lowell, Bolton Hill, and Henry George to editor, *ibid.,* March 31, 1895; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.,* 57, 232; New York *Tribune,* January 26, 1895; Curti, *Peace or War,* 108.

[64] *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.,* report of George N. Wingate, 232–33; Mariana W. Chapman to the editor, March 11, 1895, in New York *Tribune,* March 18, 1895; *Proceedings 30th Encampment Connecticut G.A.R.,* address of commander, 38.

pupils were drilling. Grand Army leaders pressed their cause earnestly before New York legislators. The governor vetoed the bill, but the movement continued unabated. Youngsters who joined the "American Guard" wore navy-blue jacket and trousers, brown leggings, and a military cap and proudly carried a sheathed bayonet and a cartridge box. Manufacturers of sporting goods hastily sent out drummers to catch the uniform trade; competition soon brought the price down to a reasonable level.[65]

The less opulent southern states disliked projects that involved increased taxation and had a propensity, moreover, to oppose anything emanating from the G.A.R. The national aide commented, "I am satisfied that it will not be practicable to do much of anything in this direction in the South without the aid of the Confederate Camps." He solicited their support, but the United Confederate Veterans were too bitter over the Grand Army's textbook crusade to give their sanction. The aide was more successful in Arizona, where the legislature made military instruction compulsory in all public schools. During 1896 and 1897 the departments continued their pressure. At the national encampment of 1897 the aide reported substantial success in New Jersey, Iowa, Colorado, and Ohio and slighter progress in Delaware and Maine.[66]

Inconclusive results in the states led the Grand Army to buttonhole congressmen for federal legislation. From 1894 on, military-training bills appeared in both houses, but they never progressed beyond favorable committee reports. While the national aide urged that Europe's "embittered and outraged" reaction to mounting American tariffs rendered military training necessary, departments publicized the issue and the Sons of Veterans added their appeals. In 1899 the aide urged members to deluge Congress with petitions for a pending bill and to send speakers into the schools to distribute propaganda. The measure in question failed,

[65] Curti, *Peace or War*, 108; New York *Tribune*, January 13, March 11, 28, April 3, 1895, April 26, 1896; *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 234; New York *Tribune*, April 26, 1896.

[66] *Journal 29th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 234; *31st National Encampment*, 209; *30th National Encampment*, 159–68; *Proceedings 31st Encampment Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 52–187; *Proceedings 30th Encampment New Hampshire G.A.R.*, 100; *Journal 18th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 182.

but the aide reported that the Spanish-American War was causing more congressmen to favor the idea. Continued lobbying brought success in 1901, when Congress provided for the detail of retired army and navy officers to assist schools in military training.[67]

Another phase of the patriotic campaign was the Grand Army's intensified textbook warfare, in which the Confederate Veterans finally took up cudgels for the authors and point of view of their own section. Union veterans, feeling the general public reaction against liberality to old soldiers after the pension gift of 1890, sought some explanation for their declining prestige. They concluded that it lay in the growing tendency of literature and textbooks to minimize the South's "crime." The Boston *Grand Army Record* asserted,

> It is often spoken of in Post meetings and at Camp Fires and on other public occasions that the general public opinion is not so favorable to the surviving Union soldiers as it formerly was. . . . Voters who have studied School Histories since 1865, have no idea what the Union Army contended for, what sacrifices they endured. . . . The present estimate of the services of the Union Army in that struggle is just what could have been expected. The present emasculated public opinion regarding the Right and Wrong of the Rebellion is the natural fruit of these emasculated School Histories. The indifference regarding the duties of the Present generation to the surviving Union soldiers is the legitimate product of False School histories written by our Professor Fiskes and our Reverend Montgomeries imported from England. Englishmen helped the Rebels when the United States was in what seemed to be its death throes. We do not now need the services of Englishmen to write up the Rebellion in our School History.[68]

These considerations stimulated Grand Army hostility to "disloyal" history. The protest of the Pennsylvania Department

[67] *Journal 31st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 214–16; *33rd National Encampment*, 344, 346–50; *35th National Encampment*, 155, 234; New York *Tribune*, January 22, April 29, 1896; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1898, p. 28; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Sons of Veterans*, 169; *17th Encampment*, 151, 152.

[68] Boston *Grand Army Record*, November, 1895; Washington *National Tribune*, March 25, 1897.

against one of the textbooks was presented to the national encampment in 1894, and the commander in chief sent out the report as a circular letter to posts. In 1895 the commander praised posts and departments for their vigorous work. And indeed, the organization's efforts were co-ordinated in an effective fashion. While national and state headquarters showered educational institutions with angry complaints, local post committees paid grim calls upon school superintendents. These committees made scathing reports on textbooks by southern writers and wrote even more bitter reviews of those produced in the North for a national sale. Department encampments and headquarters repeatedly sanctioned these efforts. A typical expression was that of the Massachusetts Department that many histories were "open to the suspicion that they have been prepared to soothe the wounded spirit of secession for the sake of Southern trade. They give over prominence and over praise to the leaders and movements of the secession forces, and so treat the events of the war period as to leave the impression upon the youthful mind that the war was merely a quarrel between two factions, in which both were equally to blame." [69]

The Grand Army's auxiliary organizations were eager to aid. At the national encampment of the Ladies of the G.A.R. in 1894 a committee condemned eight American histories for their treatment of the Civil War period. In 1895 the W.R.C. national encampment instructed department presidents to appoint committees that would co-operate with G.A.R. councils in examining textbooks and visiting school officials. Throughout the 1890's the W.R.C. continued this co-operation. In 1897 the Sons of Veterans endorsed the G.A.R.'s reports and appointed a committee to aid in achieving suppression of the black-listed books.[70]

The veterans' press, adding the force of its vitriolic columns to

[69] *Journal 28th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 248–51, 422; *29th National Encampment*, 58, 328; *Proceedings 33rd Encampment Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 176; *31st Encampment*, 52–54, 159–160; *Proceedings 18th Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 100; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Colorado and Wyoming G.A.R.*, 48, 72; *Journal 17th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 115; Boston *Grand Army Record*, July, October, 1895, January, 1897; New York *Tribune*, May 6, November 18, 20, 26, 1897; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Oregon G.A.R.*, 1895, p. 30.

[70] *Proceedings 18th Convention Ladies of the G.A.R.*, 81–83; *Proceedings 13th Convention W.R.C.*, 296; *Journal 16th Encampment Sons of Veterans*, 147; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 192.

the sacred cause, publicized the Grand Army's book reviews and followed with denunciatory reports of its own. The authors most attacked were Alexander H. Stephens, Alexander Johnson, John Fiske, and D. H. Montgomery. The publisher of one of the condemned books charged that the criticisms had been written by "certain rival book publishers," but the soldiers' journals dismissed such attempted rebuttals with scorn.[71]

In 1896 the G.A.R. encampment accepted Commander in Chief I. N. Walker's suggestion that a national committee on school histories be appointed to investigate all books commonly used. After carrying on their studies independently, the members of this commission unanimously denounced all books in current use. The committee then considered the unfinished manuscript of John B. McMaster's textbook. The University of Pennsylvania professor was eager for Grand Army approval [72] and journeyed to Chicago for a conference. He explained that his book, unlike most school histories, would dwell only briefly on colonial and revolutionary events but would treat the Civil War period at length. "I want it understood beyond doubt that in this history the great southern generals . . . are not condoned. . . . If General Lee wished to destroy the government he had no business at West Point. . . . No matter how great his generalship or heroism, they should not blind the historian to the facts."

Judge A. O. Marsh announced at the close of the conference, "Professor McMaster is endeavoring to have his history correspond with our views, but I cannot say what we will do just now." The Chicago *Post*, however, was sure the verdict would be favorable: "Although the acceptance of his history . . . is still tentative there is little doubt that his publication will be commended for adoption in every public school at the next National Encampment. . . ." [73]

Many papers, under leadership of the New York *World* and the Springfield *Republican*, immediately condemned the professor.

[71] Boston *Grand Army Record*, November, December, 1894, March, October, November, 1895, March, May, December, 1896, January, 1897; Washington *National Tribune*, October 31, 1895, July 2, 1896, March 25, 1897.

[72] *Journal 30th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 65; Chicago *Tribune*, September 4, 1896; Chicago *Post*, quoted in Boston *Grand Army Record*, April, 1897.

[73] Chicago *Post*, April, 1897, quoted in Boston *Grand Army Record*, April, 1897.

The Atlanta *Constitution* declared, "Mr. McMaster's Grand Army performance shows that he has neither the character nor the conscience of a historian. He has entered the temple of history only to defile it." Some papers denounced the G.A.R.'s textbook activity as deliberately designed to foment sectional strife.[74]

The committee's report to the national encampment of 1897 indicated that it was not to be conciliated easily. It condemned all southern texts without reservation and announced that it had found no northern product that merited "unqualified endorsement." The committee referred to McMaster's work indirectly in the comment, "One book which we regard in most respects admirable, teaches that the war is a sectional affair when it says that the battle of Bull Run began to teach the people at the North that they must not expect a speedy conquest of the South." It observed with pleasure that general interest in the subject had been awakened, and recommended that the encampment appoint a permanent committee to encourage patriotic instruction in the schools.[75]

During the ensuing year the departments were extremely active in their investigations and denunciations. Under the prodding of frightened publishers, authors hastily revised their texts and submitted them to the Grand Army for approval. When the changes were insufficient to satisfy the committees, further revision was demanded. The committee on school histories reported to the 1898 encampment "substantial improvement in the tone and sentiment of many of the histories. . . . In the more recent publications the improvement has been particularly marked and noticeable. The number of books prepared and published during the year for the use of children and young people, designed to teach patriotism, has largely increased." In 1900 this committee announced, "Several publishers gladly accepted suggested amendments, and it can now be said that the general character of these histories is satisfactory. Not only has there been given a better tone to the textbooks on history, but there has been a vast growth

[74] Boston *Grand Army Record*, May, 1897; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, May 13, 1897; *Journal 31st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 232.

[75] *Journal 31st National Encampment G.A.R.*, 232; John Bach McMaster, *A School History of the United States* (New York, 1897), 388, 407, 430–31.

in patriotic literature." The encampment approved the appointment of a national "aide" on patriotism, as well as an officer with corresponding duties for each department. Prominent among the tasks of these men would be the vigilant scrutiny of textbooks. The Wisconsin Department undertook history instruction on its own accord and sponsored "children's campfires" at which members lectured on the purpose and course of the war.[76]

Toward the close of the century the hostile reaction of Confederate veterans to this agitation grew stronger. In 1892 the reunion of Confederate Veterans appointed a history committee; two years later this council urged the association to demand legislative requirements that schools give one year's instruction in state history. The writing of state history, it believed, should be encouraged. The committee also divided all United States histories into three groups: those produced in the North with a pronounced northern bias; those northern works that achieved fairness through an "effort to curry favor with the text-book patrons in both sections," and, finally, those books which were acceptable to Confederate veterans. Among these was Alexander Stephens' *History of the United States*. The reunions of 1895 and 1896 heard similar reports.

By 1897 the feeling between Union and Confederate veterans on the textbook question had become extremely bitter. The reunion of United Confederate Veterans considered the Wisconsin Grand Army's suggestion that a committee be appointed from the survivors of both armies to write a Civil War history which would be satisfactory to both sides. But the history committee rejected the proposal on the ground that one writer was better fitted than a committee to produce a general textbook. Continuing its textbook examination, the association was particularly critical of John Fiske's work, which had been revised in 1895 and again in 1898 to meet Grand Army objections. In 1900 the reunion ordered

[76] *Proceedings 31st Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 102–106; *30th Encampment*, 60–63, 81; *Journal 18th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 164–65; *19th Encampment*, 181; *Proceedings 31st Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 132; *Proceedings 17th Encampment Missouri G.A.R.*, 94–96; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, May 13, 1897; Boston *Grand Army Record*, May, 1897, February, 1899; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 192–94; *34th National Encampment*, 143; *35th National Encampment*, 234, 249.

that a committee of three be appointed for each state to examine every history book in use for errors, omissions, or partisan statements.[77]

The Grand Army frowned upon these developments. In 1901 a Florida member informed the national encampment, "Several years must elapse before any movement of an educational or patriotic character under the auspices of the Grand Army . . . can be made popular and effective in the South. On the School History question the United Confederate Veterans and the Grand Army . . . are still in bitter conflict." The national aide on patriotism recommended that a committee be appointed to confer with a similar southern council regarding production of a history text acceptable to everyone. But the patriotism committee's objection was the same as that of the Confederate veterans; it concluded, "The work of reform must be carried on through the Departments, posts, and other patriotic organizations." [78]

Although both the G.A.R. and the United Confederate Veterans continued their investigations and agitation into the twentieth century, their reports gradually became less rancorous. The hero-worshiping attitude forced upon the public by the Grand Army eventually produced a reaction; after a generation the debunking school of history became popular. The effect of all the organization's determined work, therefore, was actually short-lived.

In this melee of nationalistic and patriotic propaganda the Grand Army did not forget its conservative economic principles. Consistently it denounced all shades of radicalism; an admitted reason for its insistence upon patriotic school exercises and military training was the desire to check the spread of radical ideas. The North Dakota commander announced, "A dim sense of loyalty is a fit soil for the cultivation of anarchy and mob violence. To foresee these evils; to provide for them by a counter education, is the part of enlightened statesmanship." Some leaders looked upon the Sons of Veterans as the country's best defense against the development of radical theories. One department commander urged his encampment to encourage this organization "as a secure guaranty

[77] Pierce, *Public Opinion and the Teaching of History*, 136–51; Boston *Grand Army Record*, November, 1898.

[78] *Journal 35th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 235, 244, 267.

for the perpetuation of the institutions for which we fought . . . and a firm bulwark against revolution, insurrection, anarchy, and other evils." Past Commander in Chief I. N. Walker lectured a Sons' encampment: "The red flag is a menace to this government and should go, and the men who teach the principles of the red flag of anarchy should get out of it." [79]

Relentlessly the Grand Army waged oral warfare on "anarchism." In May, 1897, the Missouri commander assured his encampment that the society stood for "order and good government" and was "inflexibly opposed to all that would disturb either. . . . the demagogue that would insidiously assail the conservative forces of society and social order, will find no friends in the ranks of the Grand Army of the Republic." In 1901 the national encampment earnestly requested "our legislative bodies to enact laws prohibiting the meeting of any organization that endorses anarchistic principles, and for the suppression of literature that inculcates teachings that are at variance with the benign and liberal government that we successfully defended." [80]

The veterans' demand for suppression of all teachings at "variance" with the government they defended is revealing; it indicates why they followed their leaders so readily into paths of economic and political conservatism. Servicemen have shown a universal propensity to distrust any suggested change in the system they once defended. Unless for some basic cause economic unrest is surging in their ranks, they tend to defend the economic and political status quo.[81]

Agitation for patriotic exercises, military instruction, and loyal textbooks occupied so much of the Grand Army's attention that it had little breath to spare for jingoistic fulminations against other countries. Occasionally, however, a post or department issued a scathing denunciation of some foreign state. Undoubtedly the

[79] *Journals of Annual Encampments Department of North Dakota* (1890–1910), *8th Encampment*, 17; *Journal 29th Encampment Potomac G.A.R.*, 61; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Sons of Veterans*, 150; *18th Encampment*, 44.

[80] *Proceedings 16th Encampment Missouri G.A.R.*, 22; *Proceedings 14th Encampment Montana G.A.R.*, 13; *Proceedings Reunion Society of Vermont Officers*, II (1896), 213; *Journal 35th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 280.

[81] Waller, *The Veteran Comes Back*, 194, 195; Wecter, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*, 15; Dorothy Culp, *The American Legion: A Study in Pressure Politics* (Chicago, 1939), 14–17.

organization was influenced in this attitude by the Washington *National Tribune*, which throughout the 1890's pursued a violently jingoistic policy. The journal seized upon the government's difficulties in the Bering Sea, Chile, Hawaii, and Venezuela, and with England as opportunities for violent attacks upon other nations. The paper was particularly insistent in demanding a vigorous policy against England and did its best to arouse hostility against that country.[82]

The *National Tribune* first displayed interest in Cuba in 1888, when it announced that the United States should possess the island. Our first step toward ownership should be to raise our own sugar; Spain would then regard the island as useless and be eager for a sale. When the revolution broke out, the *Tribune* expressed sympathy for Cuba and urged Congress to recognize its belligerency.[83]

Soon this interest spread to veterans' organizations. In 1895 the Union Veteran Legion expressed official abhorrence for Spain's "atrocious cruelties," and the following year it passed similar resolutions. Grand Army departments entered the fray with characteristic vigor; early in 1896 the Rhode Island, Nebraska, Illinois, Minnesota, Maryland, and Ohio encampments proclaimed their sympathy for the Cubans.[84]

Meanwhile the Washington *National Tribune* and the Indianapolis *American Tribune* grew bolder in their demands for American intervention. The latter paper cried, "Annex Cuba and have done with it. It would soon become Americanized and give us command of the Gulf and the coast of Central America which is now enjoyed by Great Britain. Pluck the fruit when it is ripe."

[82] *Proceedings 27th Encampment New Jersey G.A.R.*, 73; Washington *National Tribune*, February 18, March 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14, July 14, 1892, February 2, 9, March 30, April 6, 20, 27, May 25, 1893, February 1, 8, July 26, 1894, January 24, April 15, September 26, October 24, November 7, December 26, 1895.

[83] Washington *National Tribune*, August 2, 1888, July 28, 1892, April 11, September 12, October 31, 1895, March 5, 12, April 9, May 21, June 4, 18, 1896.

[84] *Proceedings 10th Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 60; *11th Encampment*, 56; *Proceedings 20th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 72; *Proceedings 29th Encampment Rhode Island G.A.R.*, 26; *Proceedings 20th Encampment Nebraska G.A.R.*, 82, 165; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Minnesota G.A.R.*, 179; *Proceedings 30th Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 179; *Proceedings 30th Encampment Ohio G.A.R.*, 148.

When the Grand Army departments convened early in 1897, another crop of resolutions on Cuba appeared. The Rhode Island commander condemned the government's policy as "both feeble and vicious. It has been sinister, perverse, deceptive, pusillanimous, and impotent, and of a character heretofore unknown in our foreign relations. . . . Every true man must blush for shame over the cowardly position we have so far occupied." [85]

After the *Maine* disaster the veterans' press begged for war. The *National Tribune* denounced McKinley's message as "halting, wavering, and seemingly almost timid." The Grand Army, unable to contain its fury, took action before the outbreak of hostilities. In February one department commander offered his services to Virginia's governor in raising a brigade to protect the coast. The following month he received enthusiastic response to his request that posts volunteer to raise companies. In March New York's commander offered McKinley the services of ten thousand members within ten days. With the outbreak of war, enthusiasm mounted. Posts and members overwhelmed the commander in chief with offers of military aid; some urged him to tender McKinley the armed service of the organization's entire membership. The Illinois commander offered the President the services of the state's twenty-six thousand members, while the Texas commander tendered the aid of his posts for coastal defense.[86]

These offers were received as evidence of the G.A.R.'s patriotism; there was no question of accepting military service from the white-haired veterans.[87] Many posts turned to peaceful means of co-operation. New York City's assiduous Lafayette Post members

[85] Washington *National Tribune*, November 19, 1896, March 18, June 3, September 30, October 14, 1897, February 3, 1898; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, December 10, 31, 1896, January 14, February 4, May 27, November 11, 18, December 2, 9, 1897, January 13, 27, February 10, 1898; *Proceedings 30th Encampment Rhode Island G.A.R.*, 23, 56; *Journal 13th Encampment Florida G.A.R.*, 112; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Oklahoma* (1893–1918), *7th Encampment*, 1897, p. 17; *Proceedings Annual Encampments Department of Indian Territory* (1893–1902), *6th Encampment*, 1897, p. 17.

[86] Washington *National Tribune*, March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14, 21, 28, May 5, 12, 1898; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, February 17, 24, March 3, 10, 17, 31, April 7, 14, 21, 1898; Boston *Grand Army Record*, April, 1898; *Proceedings 27th Encampment Virginia and North Carolina G.A.R.*, 24; *Proceedings 32nd Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 248; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 48; *Proceedings 32nd Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 110; *Proceedings 17th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 26.

[87] *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 48.

conceived the idea of recruiting and equipping a regiment to be composed of their sons and other picked men and officered by themselves as well as regular army officers. Thousands of young men responded to the urging of the post's six hundred members. When the latter discovered that the government had given preference to the state's national guard in filling calls for volunteers, they turned to the state and regular army for recruits. After winning more than seven thousand men for service, the post issued a circular urging other posts to follow its example. Many did, particularly in New York State. The Wisconsin commander sent enrollment blanks to his posts, which succeeded in enlisting more than two thousand men.

Members of the Department of Wyoming and Colorado offered the commander in chief a portion of their pensions to construct a first-class battleship. This vessel, to be christened "The Veteran," would be presented to the government as "a testimonial" from the old soldiers. From other sections, too, came offers of pension contributions in order to replace the *Maine* with a ship of equal size. Some members hopefully offered the government inventions "calculated to destroy the entire Spanish army by entirely new methods." During 1898 department encampments did their bit to sustain morale by expressing hearty endorsement for McKinley's policy.[88]

The Sons of Veterans believed that they were particularly qualified to render valuable service because of their drilling activities. Before the outbreak of war the national commander announced that he had already communicated with division leaders regarding action in case of hostilities. "Companies, regiments, possibly brigades, would spring from our organizations throughout the land, should the call be made. . . ." His prophecy proved correct; immediately after war was declared, the state divisions began

[88] *Proceedings 33rd Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 178–81; *Proceedings 32nd Encampment Wisconsin G.A.R.*, 61; *Proceedings 19th Encampment Colorado and Wyoming G.A.R.*, 158; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 48; *Proceedings 31st Encampment New Jersey G.A.R.*, 32; *Proceedings 16th Encampment Washington and Alaska G.A.R.*, 51; *Proceedings 9th Encampment North Dakota G.A.R.*, 15; *Proceedings 13th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 7; *Proceedings 17th Encampment Missouri G.A.R.*, 96; *Proceedings 19th Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, 172; *Proceedings 12th Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 65.

raising regiments among members. But they soon ran into difficulties with state authorities, who refused to permit one organization to represent so large a unit. Michigan authorities accepted only one company; despite the demands of Indiana members that a regiment be mustered in and officered as a unit, the governor accepted only six companies. Minnesota furnished one company of Sons. The organization hid its disappointment with expressions of pride for the achievements of individual members. The junior vice-commander boasted: ". . . many of the most efficient officers of the volunteer army are men who received their first military knowledge and the spirit of consecration to country in the Camps of Sons of Veterans. . . . Camps . . . have been the nucleus of many companies . . . and the military experience acquired in the work of the Order has qualified many men for official positions in the command of the army." [89]

Grand Army departments, as well as the national encampment, continued to uphold the administration's conduct of the war and denounced as "unwarranted and malicious" the charges of inefficiency brought against Secretary of War Alger. The organization firmly believed that its determined patriotic campaign was responsible for the public's enthusiastic support of the war. The North Dakota commander declared, "The result of that teaching has been most gloriously exhibited. . . . The splendid wave of patriotic enthusiasm which swept over the country at the outbreak of the . . . war was undeniably in a large measure owing to the example and precept of the men and women who participated . . . in the . . . civil war." The Sons of Veterans also claimed credit; a national officer asserted, "The work our Order has done in the inculcation of patriotism has shown itself in the outburst of national spirit which attended the declaration of war and the events leading up thereto." [90]

[89] *Proceedings 17th National Encampment Sons of Veterans*, "General Orders No. 2," 53; *ibid.*, 10–17; Washington *National Tribune*, June 16, 1898.

[90] *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 266; *Journal 25th Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, 36, 121; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, 1899, p. 64; *Proceedings 23rd Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 165; *Proceedings 17th Encampment Texas G.A.R.*, 41; Boston *Grand Army Record*, February, 1899; *Journal 18th Encampment North Dakota G.A.R.*, 23; *Proceedings 32nd Encampment Pennsylvania G.A.R.*, 132; *Proceedings 17th National Encampment Sons of Veterans*, 11.

It would be impossible to say what degree of truth lay in these claims. Undoubtedly the Grand Army's patriotic crusade played some part in developing a public attitude that was eager for war. Its flag-waving activities were as effective in laying the groundwork, perhaps, as were the efforts of William Randolph Hearst in producing the immediate frame of mind that demanded action.

The G.A.R. was delighted with the peace treaty and had only scorn for the antiexpansionists. Commander in Chief Gobin proclaimed that God had selected the United States to wipe out the nation that "preferred bull-fighting to free schools," just as he had selected a Yankee army to wipe out "slavery, dishonor and treason." The society was equally eager to believe that the government was divinely commissioned to rule the Philippines. Urged on by the *National Tribune*'s denunciation of the "clamorous drivel" against expansion, Grand Army men proclaimed that it was the nation's duty to assume "the white man's burden." Apparently they saw the issue facing the nation only in terms of the past. One department commander announced,

> Wherever oppression, ignorance, or any other craft has been oppressing mankind, and they rise and demand the protection of our flag . . . let us give it to them, even if we have to carry it into the very heart of China. I have no sympathy with the theory that our nation . . . must be bound by any limits which you cannot cross. In the days of 1847 there were objectors . . . who told us that we must not go to the other side of the Arkansas river, because it was Mexican territory. That territory is ours today, and we say that this nation cannot be limited in any boundary. . . .

Another commander declared that just as during the Civil War only traitors "prated about the unlawfulness of coercing the South," only traitors clamored "for the right of semisavage Filipino leaders to resist the lawful authority of this government. . . ." [91]

[91] *Proceedings 31st Encampment New Hampshire G.A.R.*, address to New Hampshire Department campfire, 145; Washington *National Tribune*, October 19, 1899, June 21, August 30, 1900; Boston *Grand Army Record*, August, 1898; *Proceedings 20th Encampment Colorado and Wyoming G.A.R.*, address of commander, Department of Colorado and Wyoming, 71; *Proceedings 33rd Encampment New York G.A.R.*, 34, 176; *Proceedings 36th Reunion Society of*

The organization co-operated enthusiastically in the task of making Porto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines faithful cogs in the new American empire. When Commander in Chief W. G. Johnson learned that Grand Army members resided in the newly acquired territories, he corresponded with them "in the belief that the instituting of . . . Posts in those islands, would materially aid in the dissemination of patriotic sentiments." Once again New York's Lafayette Post came to the fore; it contributed six hundred American flags, which the national aide on patriotism took down to Porto Rican schoolhouses. Later the post sent two hundred flags to Philippine schools; and then, after receiving flattering requests from towns and officials, sent five hundred more.[92]

On the basis of the Grand Army's unlimited praise for the valor of American troops, President McKinley suggested that the organization take on new life by inviting the younger veterans to join. This proposal seemed so sensible to some posts and members that they presented it to the national encampment. But Commander in Chief Gobin emphatically vetoed the suggestion. Other instances, too, indicated that the majority of G.A.R. men were unwilling to divide honors with a new flock of heroes. The Massachusetts Department, for example, expressed strong opposition to suggestions that Spanish-American War veterans and Civil War survivors receive equal preference in appointments.[93]

Perhaps the most obvious illustration of the Grand Army's petulance in this matter was its failure to take part in the Dewey parade. The arrangements committee for New York City's demonstration honoring Admiral George Dewey invited the city's posts to participate. When the department commander learned that the posts had been assigned to the rear of the procession, he

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Vermont Officers, II, 270; *Proceedings 37th Reunion*, 291; *Proceedings 14th National Encampment Union Veteran Legion*, 59–60.

[92] *Journal 33rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 77; *34th National Encampment*, 159; *Proceedings 33rd Encampment Illinois G.A.R.*, 134; *Proceedings 34th Encampment New York G.A.R.*, cciv; Wilbur F. Brown (comp.), *History of the Gift of Six Hundred National Flags to the Schools of Porto Rico by Lafayette Post No. 140, Department of New York, Grand Army of the Republic, 1898* (New York, 1899); *Proceedings 10th Encampment North Dakota G.A.R.*, 32; *Proceedings 34th Encampment Minnesota G.A.R.*, 84.

[93] *Proceedings 34th Encampment Massachusetts G.A.R.*, 171, 178; Indianapolis *American Tribune*, September 22, 1896; *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 265, 409; *Proceedings 32nd Encampment Ohio G.A.R.*, 93.

indignantly refused to permit them to march and issued a warning that it would be a breach of discipline to do so. Press comments in general censured him; but Commander in Chief Albert D. Shaw expressed approval, as did also hundreds of laudatory resolutions from posts throughout the country.[94] The G.A.R. had no intention of retiring to the background for the benefit of the younger veterans.

As the wave of nationalism produced by the Spanish-American War softened remaining sectional bitterness, the G.A.R. began to feel more friendly toward its former foes. The New Hampshire Department expressed official gratification at "evidence afforded by recent events of the restored loyalty of our former adversaries," while the commander in chief reported that on his southern tour he saw everywhere "the happy evidences of a broad reconciliation." These were "manifested in a manner to prove that the former sectional exclusiveness and irritations have mainly given away to cordial and reciprocal views of common American citizenship." The junior vice-commander told the 1900 encampment that the Grand Army badge was finally becoming a medal of honor south of the Ohio River. "I may truly say that the sectionalism which some of us have known and felt is practically a thing of the past, and we are again a reunited people." [95]

Some members were so gratified at this apparent decline of southern sectional spirit that they advocated the return of all the battle-torn Confederate flags still in northern hands. But the organization's majority was not prepared to go so far. At the encampment of 1898 the commander in chief opposed the suggestion, as did also the resolutions committee. The commander did, however, sanction a proposal of the New York Confederate Veterans' Camp that Congress erect a national depository to hold these flags and all other emblems North as well as South.[96]

The fact that Union veterans rejoiced over waning sectional-

[94] Washington *National Tribune*, September 28, 1899; *Proceedings 34th Encampment New York G.A.R.*, xxxvi; *Journal 27th Encampment Iowa G.A.R.*, 30.

[95] *Proceedings 33rd Encampment New Hampshire G.A.R.*, 92; *Proceedings 13th National Encampment Union Veterans' Union*, 19; *Proceedings 21st Encampment Indiana G.A.R.*, commander's address to Indiana Encampment, 181; *Journal 34th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 74.

[96] *Journal 32nd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 50, 325.

ism in the South by no means meant that they were willing to meet their former foes on equal terms. In 1899 the Union Veterans' Union denounced southerners for depriving Negroes of their legal and political equality; the following year the organization proclaimed: ". . . the Union veterans . . . have much to fear from the aggressiveness of the South, trying to mold public opinion to accept . . . its untruthful statement that the Southern people had a constitutional right to secede. . . ." Pennsylvania's Department of the Grand Army condemned a project to erect a monument for Confederate dead in the Germantown national cemetery. The Washington *National Tribune*, publicizing all evidence it could find of southern "treason," did its part to maintain unfriendly feelings.[97]

In 1900 the underlying hostility cropped out at a "blue and gray" reunion in Atlanta. Commander in Chief Shaw told southerners that "the keeping alive of sectional teachings as to the justice . . . of the cause of the South, in the hearts of the children" was "all out of order, unwise, unjust, and utterly opposed to the bonds by which the great chieftain Lee solemnly bound the cause of the South in his final surrender." General John B. Gordon, Commander in Chief of the United Confederate Veterans, immediately came forward to announce that he could never teach his children that what he fought for was wrong: "Let us cherish the memorials and history will record and heaven judge that both sides were right in fighting for what they believed was right." [98]

But Grand Army men were never willing to leave the decision to history or heaven; they held fast to their conviction, much more firm than in 1865, that the former Confederates were the defeated champions of an evil cause. Seventy-two years after hostilities ended, members were still agitating the matter when they gathered, white-haired and stooped, for their encampment at Madison, Wisconsin. The suggestion of the Pennsylvania state commission that the delegates join with Confederate survivors at Gettysburg for a July 4 celebration—with all expenses paid—

[97] *Proceedings 14th National Encampment Union Veterans' Union*, 115; *Proceedings 17th National Encampment*, 72; *Proceedings 34th Encampment Pennsylvania G.A.R.*, 251; Washington *National Tribune*, June 7, July 26, December 27, 1900.

[98] Washington *National Tribune*, July 26, 1900.

produced a bitter four-hour dispute. The encampment finally decided to accept, but stipulated that only the American flag be displayed at the reunion. The boys objected, moreover, to the commission's use of the term "War between the States" instead of the official designation, "Civil War." "There was much wrangling and telling of the old animosities between Grand Army and the United Confederate Veterans. Hot words and biting raillery could be heard issuing from the secret conclave." [99]

By 1900, when the Grand Army's membership had declined to 276,662,[100] the influence of the organized Union veterans was rapidly waning. Rejection of the society's demand for a prominent position in the Dewey parade was significant; such defiance could not have occurred a decade earlier. One factor in the pressure group's declining power was the changing political scene, which pushed the outworn sectional conflict into the background and brought forth vital issues. It was no longer easy for Republicans to appeal to veterans on the single issue of pension liberality. Although the letters "G.A.R." were facetiously declared to mean "Generally All Republicans," the party was unable to combat the interest of western members in low-tariff and free-silver issues. Moreover, the disappearance of the surplus and the development of a militant public opinion against further extravagant pension grants rendered a new pension bait inexpedient. Republicans had little incentive to continue encouraging an organized soldiers' movement.

A third factor was the growing indifference of the veterans themselves. While some continued to agitate for further concessions, many, satisfied with the pension act of 1890, allowed their Grand Army membership to lapse.[101] All the efforts of the pension agents could not rouse them from their apathy.

But the old soldiers were by no means a negligible force in 1900; a sufficient number remained interested in demanding concessions to impress politicians. The G.A.R. continued its lobbying activities into the twentieth century, and several times won

[99] Madison (Wis.) *Capital Times*, September 10, 1937; Arthur Bartlett, "A Reporter at Large; the Boys in Blue," in *New Yorker* (New York, 1925–), XIV (1938), 36–42.

[100] *Journal 34th National Encampment G.A.R.*, 85.

[101] *Proceedings 16th Encampment Department of Tennessee G.A.R.*, 43.

liberalization of the pension system. The flattering subserviency of congressmen led some veterans to believe that the nation's debt was still unpaid. These old men hoped that organization would accomplish their purpose. An enthusiastic delegate to the Union Veterans' Union encampment of 1902 cried, "Now comrades . . . if you recruit earnestly, and all fight for those who stand by us, this Order can become the greatest political power in the land. . . ." [102]

Nor did the veterans forget their self-imposed task of intensifying patriotism. The Grand Army patriotic instructor continued to perform extensive duties. Not until 1946, in fact, did the organization finally entrust this obligation to younger hands. At the Indianapolis national encampment, attended by eleven aged survivors, one-hundred-year-old Commander Hiram R. Gale admonished an organization composed of veterans of both world wars, "You boys who served in the armed forces of your country have a duty. . . . If you let the country get away from the Constitution there will be no great and strong and free United States —the United States we all fought to preserve and protect."

Faded into a dim past now were the lobbying for pensions, the threats during political crises, the petulant demands. The old commander's words brought a hundred cheering men to their feet; they stood reverently at attention while he walked with firm step to the door and turned for a final salute. And at the organization's eighty-third encampment in 1949 the national patriotic instructor gave a similar message to the respectful crowd clustered around him in a hotel lobby.[103]

Only six of the Grand Army's sixteen surviving members attended this final encampment at Indianapolis, where they were signally honored by the federal issue of a commemorative stamp, the presence of the Marine Corps Band, and a message from President Truman. Flanked by attentive delegates from the younger auxiliary societies, the six feeble old men gave a special air to the midwestern city. And despite the frequent popping of photographers' flash bulbs, one sensed in the halls and lobby of

[102] A. B. Colton to Cleveland, March 2, 1893, Cleveland MSS.; *Proceedings Encampments California and Nevada G.A.R.*, April 19, 1898, p. 9; *Proceedings 17th National Encampment Union Veterans' Union*, 58.

[103] Indianapolis *News*, August 28, 1946, August 29, 1949.

the Claypool Hotel "a strong atmosphere as if nearly a century of time had never passed." [104]

Faint echoes of the wirepulling and emotions of bygone encampments crept into the newspapers. The senior vice-commander, one story ran, was angling for the commandership. According to another report, suggestions that the Grand Army invite surviving Confederate veterans to a combined meeting met with reluctance to "join the Rebels." These stories may have been unfair; since the old gentlemen were extremely deaf, a meeting of minds between them and reporters was well-nigh impossible.[105]

One observer noted that as the six honored survivors were driven toward Monument Circle and the televised portion of the parade, each, silent in his car and oblivious to cheers, "looked with unseeing eyes at the thousands who lined the streets." [106] Were they listening, perhaps, to the boisterous shouts and marching steps of that other parade eighty-three years ago, or to the ghostly voice of Governor Morton welcoming the boys once more to Indianapolis? Or did they perhaps sense that this occasion marked the end of an era?

Certainly the spectators felt the solemn undertones. Scarcely an eye was dry at the campfire when the Marine Band concluded with an organ-like symphonic arrangement of "Taps." As the bugler's final notes echoed back over the silent throng, the military escorts wheeled out the frail old men. The cycle was completed; soon all would be gone save the cold gray monuments and the Grand Army markers along a transcontinental highway.[107]

By 1952 the name of this once mighty organization was almost forgotten, although scarcely more than a half century had passed since it evoked fear and respect from politicians. The three surviving members sat quietly on the sidelines of the political scene. Even

[104] *Ibid.*, August 29, 1949; author's interview, March 9, 1950, with Miss Cora E. Gillis, permanent executive secretary of the G.A.R., at Grand Army headquarters, Washington, D.C.

[105] Indianapolis *News*, August 29, 1949; Indianapolis *Star*, August 28, 1949; author's interview with Miss Gillis, March 9, 1950; *Journal 83rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 1949, pp. 57–62, 63.

[106] Indianapolis *Star*, September 1, 1949.

[107] *Ibid.*, September 1, 1949.

Officers of the Sons of Veterans, with the aid of Miss Gillis, worked for

more appropriate then were the verses written as the ranks began to thin:

The last of the Grand Old Army
Is drifting slowly by,
The drumbeats stir the wavering ranks
With steps no longer spry;
. . . . . .

While bands are gaily playing
And banners flaunt in air
We see an epic's closing
A saga grand and rare.
The last of the Old Guard's passing
With many a battle scar
Hats off to you in battered blue,
The last of the G.A.R.[108]

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years to realize the dream of a transcontinental highway honoring the G.A.R. By 1950 every state except Nevada from Cape Cod to Long Beach had agreed to place new markers along the route. "It is the longest transcontinental highway in the United States, and no veterans' organization has ever been honored so signally." *Journal 83rd National Encampment G.A.R.*, 40. See also *ibid.*, 37, 39. The eighty-second encampment had provided that the next annual meeting would be the organization's final one. The Grand Army itself, however, was to continue officially until the death of its last member. *Ibid.*, 57.

[108] Excerpt from "The Last of the G.A.R.," written in 1916 by the author's father, Frederick Rulkotter, and dedicated to his father, Commander of Lytle Post 147, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Bibliographical Note

A study which covers the many phases of the Union soldiers' political activities ranging over a period of forty years necessarily draws on a considerable number of sources. The major facts and interpretations contained in *Veterans in Politics,* however, are based upon a relatively small number of manuscript collections, newspapers, and official records. Since full citations are given in the footnotes, it seems unnecessary to repeat in a formal bibliography the sources used.

As explained in the preface, Grand Army records for the early period are incomplete. Although more than a score of manuscript collections in the Library of Congress provide salient points for the study's early chapters, the basic story of the veterans' political activities outside as well as within the G.A.R. is told by the William E. Chandler MSS. (1862–1901), 1864–89; James A. Garfield MSS. (1852–81), 1863–81, and Letter Books (1852–81), 1868–81; Andrew Johnson MSS. (1831–91), 1865–69; John Alexander Logan MSS. (c. 1850–86, and unarranged letters of Mrs. Logan, 1886–1915), 1861–1915; George B. McClellan MSS. (1842–88), First Ser., 1863–88, and undated material; Second Ser., 1863–88, and undated material; Lyman Trumbull MSS. (1855–73), 1862–72; and Elihu B. Washburne MSS. (1832–82), 1864–81. All these collections are at the Library of Congress. Equally valuable is a set to be found at the Library of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, at Madison: the Lucius Fairchild MSS. (1819, 1830–1923), 1861–96, and Letter Books, personal letters (1865–81), 1865–81, and consular letters (1872–77), 1872–77.

For the later chapters, covering a period where the official records of veteran societies bulk large, manuscript sources such as the Logan and Fairchild collections are still significant. Among others that are filled with pertinent information are three housed by the Library of Congress: Grover Cleveland MSS. (1859–1907), 1864–97; Benjamin Harrison MSS. (1842–1901), 1860–96, Scrap Books (1853–1901), 1853–1901, and E. F. Tibbott Transcripts (1884–96), 1884–96; and William Tecumseh Sherman MSS. (1837–91), 1865–91, and Letter Books (1866–91), 1884–88. The Harrison set was opened to general use after completion of this study's original form as a dissertation in 1938.

Newspapers contain essential material on the formation and early development of veteran societies, and, like the manuscripts, afford a basis for political interpretation. Among the most informative are the Chicago *Tribune* (1847——), 1866–96; Indianapolis *Daily Journal* (1823–1904), 1863–76; Indianapolis *Daily State Sentinel* (1841–1906), 1861–88; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal* (1852–1909), 1866–68; New York *Citizen* (1864–73 [?]), 1868; New York *Daily Tribune* (1841–1906), 1864–1900; New York *Herald* (1835–1924), 1864–92; New York *World* (1860–1931), 1864–84; and Springfield *Illinois Daily State Journal* (1848——), 1866, 1868. Three veterans' newspapers that produce a wealth of material for the early period of the study are the Madison (Wis.) *Soldiers' Record* (1866–76), 1869–76 (monthly to July, 1867; weekly to November, 1871; semi-weekly during 1872; afterward monthly); New York *Soldier's Friend,* monthly (1864–70), 1864–70; weekly (1868–69), 1868–69; and Wash-

ington (D.C.) *Great Republic*, weekly (1866–68), 1867; semi-weekly (July–September, 1867), 1867.

The Chicago *Tribune*, New York *Daily Tribune*, New York *Herald*, and New York *World* are equally as good for the later as for the early period. Of especial importance among the others used are the Minneapolis *Tribune* (1867——), 1888–96; and New York *Daily Graphic* (1873–89), 1886–88. Most useful of the veterans' newspapers are the Boston *Grand Army Record* (1885–1901), 1890–99; Columbus (Ohio) *Veteran* (1881–83), 1881–83; Indianapolis *American Tribune* (1880–1906), 1890–98; Nashville *Grand Army Sentinel* (1885–86), 1885; and Washington (D.C.) *National Tribune* (1877——), 1877–1901.

For the later period a running commentary on veterans and their political importance is provided by such periodicals as *Harper's Weekly, A Journal of Civilization* (New York, 1857–1916), XXVIII–XL (1884–96); *Nation* (New York, 1865——), XXXVIII–XLIII (1884–89); and *Public Opinion* (Washington and New York, 1886–1906), I–XV (1886–93).

Government documents, including various Senate and House reports, the *Congressional Globe* (1833–73), 111 vols., XLII–CXI (1860–73); and *Congressional Record* (1873——), I–CXC (1873–1900), furnish basic information for the entire period of the study.

Official records of all Union veterans' societies and of the Grand Army's auxiliary organizations offer essential material. Of primary importance, however, are the national and state journals of the G.A.R., which the author has used from the earliest available date through 1901. The national encampment proceedings, circulars, and general orders of that leading veterans' organization are to be found in the *Proceedings of the First to Tenth Meetings 1866–76 of the Grand Army of the Republic, with Digest of Decisions, Rules of Order and Index* (Philadelphia, 1877); *Proceedings of Annual Meetings of the National Encampments, Grand Army of the Republic* [sometimes entitled *Journal of Annual Encampments. . . .*] (published annually at various places, 1877–1949). The official records of the Grand Army's state departments are variously labeled and places of publication are usually changed from year to year. In this study titles of state as well as national proceedings are identified in full on first reference and subsequently abbreviated.

In the initial citations terminal dates of G.A.R. state encampment proceedings are stated as accurately as possible. But in some cases it could not be determined whether the early journals were ever published, or whether a copy still exists. To illustrate, in 1895 General A. W. Greely urged state Grand Army officials to fill the gaps in the War Department's set of proceedings. Some department officials, as in Illinois, Colorado, and Indian Territory, replied that the requested journals had been lost or accidentally destroyed. (These letters are attached to volumes of proceedings bound by the War Department.) In other cases General Greely was more successful, as attested by the manuscript journals incorporated in the volumes of a few state proceedings. Footnote indication has been made in those instances where the earliest journal found by the author was for a later encampment than the department's first gathering.

Some sets of encampment journals now housed by the Library of Congress are incomplete; gaps appear especially among those volumes for encampments held after 1900. Possibly these blank spaces will be filled when the Library receives the printed material now stored in New York by G.A.R. headquarters.

Miss Cora E. Gillis, the national executive secretary of the Grand Army, graciously gave the author precise information regarding those departments that have published proceedings since 1935. For information about departments that disbanded before 1935, however, it was necessary to rely on Library of

Congress material, which was acquired from the War Department and supplemented in 1920 by acquisitions from Grand Army national headquarters.

Party convention reports, platforms, campaign textbooks, and political pamphlets furnish useful information for a study of veterans in politics. Particularly helpful is George D. Ellis (comp.), *Platforms of the Two Great Political Parties, 1856–1928 Inclusive,* under direction of William Tyler Page, U.S. House of Representatives, July, 1928 (Washington, 1928).

Printed letters, diaries, and recollections cast light on particular points or incidents and give perspective to the veterans' movement. Among them are such works as the *Diary of Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy under Lincoln and Johnson,* with an introduction by John T. Morse, Jr. (Boston and New York, 1911), 3 vols.; Charles Richard Williams (ed.), *Diary and Letters of Rutherford Birchard Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States* (Columbus, O., 1922–26), 5 vols.; and such recollections as Joseph Benson Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life* (Cincinnati, 1916), 2 vols.; Julia B. Foraker (Mrs. Joseph Benson Foraker), *I Would Live It Again, Memories of a Vivid Life* (New York, 1932); Almira Russell Hancock, *Reminiscences of Winfield Scott Hancock* (New York, 1887); George Washington Julian, *Political Recollections 1850–1872* (Chicago, 1884); Mrs. John A. Logan, *Reminiscences of a Soldier's Wife* (New York, 1913); George Brinton McClellan, *McClellan's Own Story: the War for the Union* (New York, 1887); Mary Harriet Stephenson, *Dr. B. F. Stephenson, Founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, A Memoir* (Springfield, Ill., 1894).

Many biographies and special studies provide material which illuminates special phases of the major theme of this study. Of particular interest are three monographs: William Henry Glasson, *Federal Military Pensions in the United States* (New York, 1918); Donald Le Crone McMurry, "Civil War Pensions, 1885–1897" (MS. doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1921); John William Oliver, *History of the Civil War Military Pensions, 1861–1885* (Madison, 1917). These three studies, based upon government documents, newspapers, and periodicals, trace the history of Union veterans' pension legislation.

Undoubtedly sources relating to various phases of the Union veterans' activities in politics remain untouched. Diligent exploration of dusty attics and lightless basements as well as determined ransacking of forgotten trunks may from time to time bring rewarding discoveries. These crumbling journals, yellowed diaries, and faded letters will supplement the already tremendous volume of material that beckons the student of Union veterans.

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